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# COMALA:

A  
DRAMATIC POEM\*.

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## THE PERSONS.

FINGAL.	MELILCOMA,	} daughters of Morni,
HIDALLAN.	DEBSAGRENA,	
COMALA.	BARDS.	

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### DEBSAGRENA.

**T**he chase is over. --- No noise on Arden but  
the torrent's roar! ——— Daughter of Morni,  
come from Crona's banks. Lay down the bow and  
take

\* This poem is valuable on account of the light it  
throws on the antiquity of Ossian's compositions.  
The Caracul mentioned here is the same with Ca-  
racalla the son of Severus, who in the year 211

take the harp. Let the night come on with songs,  
and our joy be great on Ardven.

M E L I I -

commanded an expedition against the Caledonians.  
— The variety of the measure shews that the  
poem was originally set to music, and perhaps pre-  
sented before the chiefs upon solemn occasions. —  
Tradition has handed down the story more complete  
than it is in the poem. — “ Comala, the daugh-  
ter of Sarno king of Inistore or Orkney islands,  
fell in love with Fingal the son of Comhal at a feast,  
to which her father had invited him, [Fingal, B.  
III.] upon his return from Lochlin, after the death  
of Agandecca. Her passion was so violent, that  
she followed him, disguised like a youth, who  
wanted to be employed in his wars. She was soon  
discovered by Hidallan the son of Lamor, one of  
Fingal's heroes, whose love she had slighted some  
time before — Her romantic passion and beauty  
recommended her so much to the king, that he had  
resolved to make her his wife; when news was  
brought him of Caracul's expedition. He marched  
to stop the progress of the enemy, and Comala at-  
tended him. — He left her on a hill, within  
sight of Caracul's army, when he himself went to  
battle,

# A DRAMATIC POEM. 5

## MELILCOMA \*.

And night comes on, thou blue-eyed maid, gray  
 night grows dim along the plain. I saw a deer at  
 Crona's stream; a mossy bank he seemed through the  
 gloom, but soon he bounded away. A meteor played  
 round his branchy horns; and the awful faces † of  
 other times looked from the clouds of Crona.

## DERSAGRENA \*\*.

These are the signs of Fingal's death. — The  
 king of shields is fallen! --- and Caracul prevails. Ri-  
 se, Comala ††, from thy rocks; daughter of Sarno,  
 rise in tears. The youth of thy love is low, and his  
 ghost is already on our hills. ME-

battle, having previously promised, if he survived,  
 to return that night. "The sequel of the story may  
 be gathered from the poem itself,

\* Melilcoma, — *soft-rolling eye.*

† *Apparent diræ facies, inimicaque Trojæ*

*Numina magna deum.*

VIRG.

——— dreadful sounds I hear,

And the dire forms of hostile gods appear.

DRYDEN.

\*\* Dersagrena, *the brightness of a sun-beam.*

†† Comala, *the maid of the pleasant brow.*

## MELILCOMA.

There Comala sits forlorn! two gray dogs near  
 shake their rough ears, and catch the flying breeze.  
 Her red cheek rests on her arm, and the mountain  
 wind is in her hair. She turns her blue-rolling eyes  
 towards the fields of his promise. — Where art  
 thou, O Fingal, for the night is gathering around?

## C O M A L A,

O CARUN \* of the streams! why do I behold thy  
 waters rolling in blood? Has the noise of the battle  
 been heard on thy banks; and sleeps the king of Mor-  
 ven? — Rise, moon, thou daughter of the sky!  
 look from between thy clouds, that I may behold the  
 light of his steel, on the field, of his promise. — Or  
 rather

\* Carun or Cara'on, a winding river. — This river  
 retains still the name of Carron, and falls into the  
 Forth some miles to the North of Falkirk.

—— *Gentesque alias cum pelleret armis  
 Sedibus, aut victus vilem servaret in usum  
 Servitii, hic contenta suos defendere fines  
 Roma securigeris prætendit mænia Scotis:  
 Hic spe progressus posita, Caronis ad undam  
 Terminus Ausonii signat divortis regni.*

BUCHANAN.

A D R A M A T I C P O E M. 7

rather let the meteor, that lights our departed fathers through the night, come, with its red light, to shew me the way to my fallen hero. Who will defend me from sorrow? Who from the love of Hidallan? Long shall Comala look before she can behold Fingal in the midst of his host; bright as the beam of the morning in the cloud of an early shower.

HIDALLAN \*.

Roll, thou mist of gloomy Crona, roll on the path of the hunter. Hide his steps from mine eyes, and let me remember my friend no more. The bands of battle are scattered, and no crowding steps are round the noise of his steel. O Carun, roll thy streams of blood, for the chief of the people fell.

COMA-

\* Hidallan was sent by Fingal to give notice to Comala of his return; he, to revenge himself on her for flighting his love some time before, told her that the king was killed in battle. He even pretended that he carried his body from the field to be buried in her presence; and this circumstance makes it probable that the poem was presented of old.



## COMALA.

Who fell on Carun's grassy banks, son of the  
cloudy night? Was he white as the snow of Arden?  
Blooming as the bow of the shower? Was his hair  
like the mist of the hill, soft and curling in the day of  
the sun? Was he like the thunder of heaven in batt-  
le? Fleet as the roe of the desert?

## HIDALLAN.

O that I might behold his love, fair-leaning  
from her rock! Her red eye dim in tears, and her  
blushing cheek half hid in her locks! Blow, thou  
gentle breeze, and lift the heavy locks of the maid,  
that I may behold her white arm, and lovely cheek of  
her sorrow!

## COMALA.

And is the son of Comhal fallen, chief of the  
mournful tale? The thunder rolls on the hill! —  
The lightening flies on wings of fire! But they frigh-  
ten not Comala; for her Fingal fell. Say, chief of  
the mournful tale, fell the breaker of shields?

## HIDALLAN.

The nations are scattered on their hills; for  
they shall hear the voice of the chief no more.

COMA-

## A DRAMATIC POEM.

9

### COMALA.

Confusion pursue thee over thy plains; and destruction overtake thee, thou king of the world. Few be thy steps tho thy grave; and let one virgin mourn thee. Let her be, like Comala, tearful in the days of her youth. — Why hast thou told me, Hidallan, that my hero fell? I might have hoped a little while his return, and have thought I saw him on the distant rock; a tree might have deceived me with his appearance; and the wind of the hill been the sound of his horn in mine ear. O that I were on the banks of Carun! that my tears might be warm on his cheek!

### HIDALLAN.

He lies not on the banks of Carun: on Ardven heroes raise his tomb. Look on them, O moon, from thy clouds; be thy beam bright on his breast, that Comala may behold him in the light of his armour.

### COMALA.

Stop, ye sons of the grave, till I behold my love. He left me at the chace alone. I knew not that he went to war. He said he would return with the night; and the king of Morven is returned. Why didst thou

As

not

not tell me that he would fall, O trembling son of the rock \* ! Thou hast seen him in the blood of his youth, but thou didst not tell Comala !

## MELILCOMA.

What sound is that on Ardven ? Who is that bright in the vale ? Who comes like the strength of rivers, when their crowded waters glitter to the moon ?

## COMALA.

Who is it but the foe of Comala, the son of the king of the world ! Ghost of Fingal ! do thou, from thy cloud, direct Comala's bow. Let him fall like the hart of the desert. — It is Fingal in the crowd of his ghosts. — Why dost thou come, my love, to frighten and please my soul ?

## FINGAL.

Raise, ye bards of the song, the wars of the streamy Carun. Caracul has fled from my arms along  
the

\* By *son of the rock* she means a druid. It is probable that some of the order of the druids remained as late as the beginning of the reign of Fingal ; and that Comala had consulted one of them concerning the event of the war with Caracul.

A DRAMATIC POEM. II

the fields of his pride. He fers far distant like a meteor that incloses a spirit of night, when the winds drive it over the heath, and the dark woods are gleaming around.

I heard a voice like the breeze of my hills. Is it the huntress of Galmal, the white-handed daughter of Sarno? Look from thy rocks \*, my love; and let me hear the voice of Comala.

COMALA.

Take me to the cave of thy rest, O lovely son of death! —

FINGAL.

Come to the cave of my rest, — The storm is over †, and the sun is on our fields. Come to the cave of my rest, huntress of echoing Cona.

COMALA.

He is returned with his fame; I feel the right hand of his battles. — But I must rest beside the  
rock

\* O my dove *that art* in the clefts of the rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice.

SOLOMON'S Song.

† The winter is past, the rain is over and gone.

SOLOMON'S Song.

rock till my soul settle from fear. --- Let the harp be near; and raise the song, ye daughters of Morni.

D E R S A G R E N A.

Comala has slain three deer on Ardven, and the fire ascends on the rock; go to the feast of Comala, king of the woody Morven!

F I N G A L.

Raise, ye sons of song, the wars of the streamy Carun; that my white-handed maid may rejoice; while I behold the feast of my love.

B A R D S.

Roll, streamy Carun, roll in joy, the sons of battle fled. The steed is not seen on our fields; and the wings \* of their pride spread in other lands. The sun will now rise in peace, and the shadows descend in joy. The voice of the chase will be heard; and the shields hang in the hall. Our delight will be in the war of the ocean, and our hands be red in the blood of Lochlin. Roll, streamy Carun, roll in joy, the sons of battle fled.

M E L I L.

\* Perhaps the poet alludes to the Roman eagle.



A DRAMATIC POEM. 13

MELILCOMA.

Descend, ye light mists from high; ye moon-beams, lift her fool. — Pale lies the maid at the rock! Comala is no more!

FINGAL.

Is the daughter of Sarno dead; the whiteboomed maid of my love? Meet me, Comala, on my heaths, when I sit alone at the streams of my hills.

HIDALLAN.

Ceased the voice of the huntress of Galmal? Why did I trouble the soul of the maid? When shall I see thee, with joy, in the chace of the dark-brown hinds?

FINGAL.

Youth of the gloomy brow! no more shalt thou feast in my halls. Thou shalt not pursue my chace, and my foes shall not fall by thy sword\*. — Lead me to the place of her rest that I may behold her beauty. — Pale she lies at the rock, and the cold winds lift her hair. Her bow-string sounds in

\* The sequel of the story of Hidallan is introduced, as an episode, in the poem which immediately follows in this collection.

## 14 COMALA: A DRAMATIC POEM.

in the blast, and her arrow was broken in her fall.  
Raise the praise of the daughter of Sarno, and give  
her name to the wind of the hills.

### BARDS.

See! meteors roll around the maid; and moon-  
beams lift her soul! Around her, from their clouds,  
bend the awful faces of her fathers; Sarno \* of the  
gloomy brow; and the red-rolling eyes of Fidallan.  
When shall thy whitehand arise, and thy voice be  
heard on our rocks? The maids shall seek thee on  
the heath, but they will not find thee. Thou shalt  
come, at times, to their dreams, and settle peace in  
their soul. Thy voice shall remain in their ears †,  
and they shall think with joy on the dreams of their  
rest. Meteors roll around the maid, and moon-beams  
lift her soul!

\* Sarno the father of Comala died soon after the  
flight of his daughter. — — Fidallan was the first  
king that reigned in Inistore.

† The angel ended, and in Adam's ear  
So charming left his voice, that he a while  
Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear.

MILTON.

THE

# WAR OF CAROS\*:

## A POEM.

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Bring, daughter of Toscar, bring the harp ; the  
light of the song rises in Ossian's soul. It is  
like the field, when darkness covers the hills around,  
and the shadow grows slowly on the plain of the sun.

I be-

- \* Caros is probably the noted usurper Carausius, by birth a Menapian, who assumed the purple in the year 284 ; and, seizing on Britain, defeated the emperor Maximian Herculus in several naval engagements, which gives propriety to his being called in this poem *the king of ships*. — He repaired Agricola's wall, in order to obstruct the incursions of the Caledonians ; and when he was employed in that work, it appears he was attacked by a party under the command of Oscar the son of Ossian. This battle is the foundation of the present poem, which is addressed to Malvina the daughter of Toscar.

# 16 THE WAR OF CAROS:

I Behold my son, O Malvina, near the mossy rock of Crona \*; but it is the mist † of the desert tinged with the beam of the west: Lovely is the mist that assumes the form of Oscar! turn from it, ye winds, when ye roar on the side of Ardven.

Who comes towards my son, with the murmur of a song? His staff is in his hand, his gray hair loose on the wind. Surly joy lightens his face; and he often looks back to Caros. It is Ryno \*\* of the song, he that went to view the foe.

What does Caros king of ships, said the son of the now mournful Ossian? spreads he the wings †† of his pride, bard of the times of old?

Ho

\* Crona is the name of a small stream which runs into the Carron. On its banks is the scene of the preceding dramatic poem.

† Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke. SOLOMON'S Song.

\*\* Ryno is often mentioned in the ancient poetry. — He seems to have been a bard, of the first rank, in the days of Fingal.

†† The Roman eagle.

He spreads them, Oscar, replied the bard, but  
it is behind his gathered heap \*. He looks over his  
stones with fear, and beholds thee terrible, as the  
ghost of night that rolls the wave to his ships.

Go, thou first of my bards, says Oscar, and  
take the spear of Fingal. Fix a flame on its point,  
and shake it to the winds of heaven. Bid him, in  
songs, to advance, and leave the rolling of his wave.  
Tell to Caros that I long for battle; and that my bow  
is weary of the chace of Cona. Tell him the mighty  
are not here; and that my arm is young.

He went with the sound of his song. Oscar re-  
ared his voice on high. It reached his heroes on Ar-  
ven, like the noise of a cave †; when the sea of  
Togorma rolls before it; and its trees meet the roa-  
ring winds. — They gather round my son like  
the streams of the hill? when, after rain, they  
roll in the pride of their course.

Ryno! came to the mighty Caros, and struck his  
flaming spear. Come to the battle of Oscar, O thou  
that

\* Agricola's wall which Carausius repaired.

† — As when the hollow rocks retain

The sound of blustering winds. — MILTON,



that fitteſt on the rolling of waters. Fingal is diſtant far; he hears the ſongs of his bards in Morven: and the wind of his hall is in his hair. His terrible ſpear is at his ſide; and his ſhield that is like that darkened moon. Come to the battle of Oſcar; the hero is alone.

He came not over the ſtreamy Carun \*; the bard returned with his ſong. Gray night grows dim on Crona. The feaſt of ſhells is ſpread. A hundred oaks burn to the wind, and faint light gleams over the heath. The ghoſts of Ardden paſs through the beam, and ſhew their dim and diſtant forms. Comala \* is half unſeen on her meteor; and Hidallan is fullen and dim, like darkened moon behind the miſt of night.

Why art thou ſad? ſaid Ryno; for he alone beheld the chief. Why art thou ſad, Hidallan, haſt thou not received thy fame? The ſongs of Oſſian have been heard, and thy gholt has brightened in the  
wind,

\* The river Carron.

† This is the ſcene of Comala's death, which is the ſubject of the dramatic poem. — The poet mentions her in this place, in order to introduce the ſequel of Hidallan's ſtory, who, on account of her death, had been expelled from the wars of Fingal.

wind, when thou didst bend from thy cloud to hear  
the song of Morven's bard.

And do thine eyes behold the hero, said Oscar,  
like the dim meteor of night? Say, Ryno, say, how  
fell the chief that was so renowned in the days of our  
fathers? — His name remains on the rocks of  
Cona; and I have often seen the streams of his hills.

Fingal, replied the bard, had driven Hidallan  
from his wars. The king's soul was sad for Comala,  
and his eyes could not behold Hidallan.

Lonely, sad, along the heath, he slowly mo-  
ved with silent steps. His arms hang disordered on  
his side. His hair flies loose from his helmet. The  
tear is in his down-cast eyes; and the sigh half-silent  
in his breast.

Three days he strayed unseen, alone, before he  
came to Lamor's halls: the mossy halls of his fathers,  
at the stream of Balva \*. — There Lamor sat  
alone

\* This is perhaps that small stream, still retaining the  
name of Balva, which runs through the romantic  
valley of Glentivar in Stirlingshire. Balva signifies  
*a silent stream*; and Glentivar, *the sequestered vale*.

alone beneath a tree ; for he had sent his people with Hidallan to war. The stream ran at his feet, and his gray head rested on his staff. Sightless are his aged eyes. He hums the song of other times. — The noise of Hidallan's feet came to his ear : he knew the tread of his son.

Is the son of Lamor returned ; or is it the sound of his ghost ? Hast thou fallen on the banks of Carun, son of the aged Lamor ? Or, if I hear the sound of Hidallan's feet ; where are the mighty in war ? where are my people, Hidallan, that were wont to return with their echoing shields ? — Have they fallen on the banks of Carun ?

No : replied the sighing youth, the people of Lamor live. They are renowned in battle, my father ; but Hidallan is renowned no more. I must sit alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of the battle grows.

But thy fathers never sat alone, replied the rising pride of Lamor ; they never sat alone on the banks of Balva, when the roar of battle rose. — Dost thou not behold that tomb ? Mine eyes discern it not : there rests the noble Garmállon who never fled from

war. ——— Come, thou renowned in battle, he  
says, come to thy father's tomb. ——— How am I  
renowned, Garmállon, for my son has fled from war?

King of the streamy Balva! said Hidallan with a  
sigh, why dost thou torment my soul? Lamor, I ne-  
ver feared. --- Fingal was sad for Comala, and denied  
his wars to Hidallan: Go to the gray streams of  
thy land, he said, and moulder like a leafless oak,  
which the winds have bent over Balva, never more  
to grow.

And must I hear, Lamor replied, the lonely  
tread of Hidallan's feet? When thousands are renow-  
ned in battle, shall he bend over my gray streams?  
Spirit of the noble Garmállon! carry Lamor to his  
place; his eyes are dark; his soul is sad: and his son  
has lost his fame.

Where, said the youth, shall I search for fame  
to gladden the soul of Lamor? From whence shall I  
return with renown, that the sound of my arms may  
be pleasant in his ear? ——— If I go to the chace of  
hinds, my name will not be heard. --- Lamor will  
not feel my dogs, with his hands, glad at my arri-  
val from the hill. He will not enquire of his moun-  
tains, or of the dark-brown deer of his desarts.

B ;

I must



I must fall, said Lamor, like a leafless oak: it grew on a rock, but the winds have overturned it. — My ghost will be seen on my hills, mournful for my young Hidallan. Will not ye, ye mists, as ye rise, hide him from my sight? — My son! --- go to Lamor's hall: there the arms of our fathers hang. --- Bring the sword of Garmállon; --- he took it from a foe.

He went and brought the sword with all its studded thongs. — He gave it to his father. The gray-haired hero felt the point with his hand. —

My son! --- lead me to Garmállon's tomb: it rises beside that rustling tree. The long grass is withered; --- I heard the breeze whistling there. --- A little fountain murmurs near, and sends its water to Balva. There let me rest; it is noon: and the sun is on our fields.

He led him to Garmállon's tomb. Lamor pierced the side of his son. — They sleep together; and their ancient halls moulder on Balva's banks. --- Ghosts are seen there at noon: the valley is silent, and the people shun the place of Lamor.

Mournful is thy tale, said Oscar, son of the times of old! --- My soul sighs for Hidallan; 'he fell in the



the days of his youth. He flies on the desert, and his wandering is in a foreign land. —

Sons of the echoing Morven! draw near to the foes of Fingal. Send the night away in songs; and watch the strength of Caros. Oscar goes to the people of other times; to the shades of silent Ardven; where his fathers sit dim in their clouds, and behold the future war. --- And art thou there, Hidallan, like a half-extinguished meteor? Come to my sight, in thy sorrow, chief of the roaring Balva!

The heroes move with their songs. --- Oscar slowly ascends the hill. --- The meteors of night are setting on the heath before him. A distant torrent faintly roars. --- Unfrequent blasts rush through aged oaks. The half-enlightened moon sinks dim and red behind her hill. --- Feeble voices are heard on the heath. — Oscar drew his sword.

Come, said the hero, O ye ghosts of my fathers! ye that fought against the kings of the world! --- Tell me the deeds of future times; and your discourse in your caves; when you talk together and behold your sons in the fields of the valiant.

Trenmor came, from his hill, at the voice of his mighty son. --- A cloud, like the steed of the

stranger, supported his airy limbs. His robe is of the mist of Lano, that brings death to the people. His sword is a meteor half-extinguished. His face is without form, and dark. He sighed thrice over the hero: and thrice the winds of the night roared around. Many were his words to Oscar: but they only came by halves to our ears: they were dark as the tales of other times, before the light of the song arose. He slowly vanished, like a mist that melts on the sunny hill.

It was then, O daughter of Toscar, my son began first to be sad. He foresaw the fall of his race; and, at times, he was thoughtful and dark; like the sun \* when he carries a cloud on his face; but he looks afterwards on the hills of Cona.

Oscar passed the night among his fathers, gray morning met him on the banks of Carun.

A green vale surrounded a tomb which arose in the times of old. Little hills lift their head at a distance; and stretch their old trees to the wind. The warriors of Caros sat there, for they had passed the  
stream

\* ——— *caput obscura nitidum ferrugine texit.*

stream by night. They appeared, like the trunks of aged pines, to the pale light of the morning.

Oscar stood at the tomb, and raised thrice his terrible voice. The rocking hills echoed around: the starting-voes bounded away. And the trembling ghosts of the dead fled, shrieking on their clouds. So terrible was the voice of my son, when he called his friends.

A thousand spears rose around; the people of Caros rose. --- Why daughter of Toscar, why that tear? My son, though alone, is brave. Oscar is like a beam of the sky; he turns around and the people fall. His hand is like the arm of a ghost, when he stretches it from a cloud; the rest of his thin form is unseen: but the people die in the vale.

My son beheld the approach of the foe; and he stood in the silent darkness of his strength. --- "Am I alone, said Oscar, in the midst of a thousand foes? --- Many a spear is there! --- many a darkly-rolling eye! --- Shall I fly to Ardven? --- But did my fathers ever fly! --- The mark of their arm is in a thousand battles. --- Oscar too will be renowned. --- Come, ye dim ghosts of my fathers, and behold my

26 THE WAR OF CAROS:

deeds in war! --- I may fall; but I will be renowned like the race of the echoing Morven \*. “

He stood dilated in his place, like a flood swelling in narrow vale. The battle came, but they fell: bloody was the sword of Oscar. — The noise reached his people at Crona; they came like a hundred streams. The warriors of Caros fled, and Oscar remained like a rock left by the ebbing sea.

Now

\* This passage is very like the soliloquy of Ulysses upon a similar occasion.

ὦ ἱμεῖς ἐγὼ, τί πάθω; μέγα μὲν κακὸν αἰκε  
φέξωμαι,

Πλεθὺν ταρξήσας\* το δὲ ρίγιον αἰκεν ἄλω  
Μῆνος' &c.

HOM. II. 11.

What farther subterfuge, what hopes remain?  
What shame, inglorious if I quit the plain?  
What danger, singly if I stand the ground,  
My friends all scatter'd, all the foes around?  
Yet wherefore doubtful? let this truth suffice;  
The brave meets danger, and the coward flies:  
To die or conquer proves a hero's heart,  
And knowing this, I know a soldier's part.

POPE.



Now dark and deep, with all his steeds, Caros rolled his might along : the little streams are lost in his course ; and the earth is rocking round. — Battle spreads from wing to wing : ten thousand swords gleam at once in the sky. — But why should Ossian sing of battles ? --- For never more shall my steel shine in war. I remember the days of my youth with sorrow ; when I feel the weakness of my arm. Happy are they who fell in their youth, in the midst of their renown ! --- They have not beheld the tombs of their friends : or failed to bend the bow of their strength. — Happy art thou, O Oscar, in the midst of thy rushing blast. Thou often goest to the fields of thy fame, where Caros fled from thy lifted sword.

Darkness comes on my soul, O fair daughter of Toscar, I behold not the form of my son at Carun ; nor the figure of Oscar on Crona. The rustling winds have carried him far away ; and the heart of his father is sad.

But lead me, O Malvina, to the fount of my woods, and the roar of my mountain streams. Let the chace be heard on Cona ; that I may think on the  
days



28 THE WAR OF CAROS: A POEM.

days of other years. --- And bring me the harp, O maid, that I may touch it when the light of my soul shall arise. — Be thou near, to learn the song; and future times shall hear of Ossian.

The sons of the feeble hereafter will lift the voice on Cona, and, looking up to the rocks, say, „Here Ossian dwelt.“ They shall admire the chiefs of old, and the race that are no more; while we ride on our clouds, Malvina, on the wings of the roaring winds. Our voices shall be heard, at times, in the desert; and we shall sing on the winds of the rock.

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THE

# WAR OF INIS-THONA\*:

## A P O E M.

---

**O**ur youth is like the dream of the hunter on the hill of heath. He sleeps in the mild beams of the sun ; but he awakes amidst a storm ; the red lightning flies around : and the trees shake their heads to the wind. He looks back with joy on the day of the sun, and the pleasant dreams of his rest!

When

\* Inis-thona, *i. e.* *the island of waves*, was a country of Scandinavia subject to its own king, but depending upon the kingdom of Lochlin. — This poem is an episode introduced in a great work composed by Ossian, in which the actions of his friends, and his beloved son Oscar were interwoven. — The work itself is lost, but some episodes, and the story of the poem, are handed down by tradition. There are some now living, who, in their youth, have heard the whole repeated.

When shall Ossian's youth return, or his ear  
delight in the sound of arms? When shall I, like  
Oscar, travel \* in the light of my steel? --- Come,  
with your streams, ye hills of Cona, and listen to  
the voice of Ossian! The song rises, like the sun,  
in my soul; and my heart feels the joys of other  
times.

I behold my towers, O Selma! and the oaks of  
thy shaded wall: --- thy streams sound in my ear; thy  
heroes gather round. Fingal sits in the midst; and  
leans on the shield of Trenmor: --- his spear stands  
against the wall; he listens to the song of his bards. ---  
The deeds of his arm are heard; and the actions of  
the king in his youth.

Oscar had returned from the chace, and heard  
the hero's praise. --- He took the shield of Branno †  
from

\* Travelling in the greatness of his strength.

ISAIAH lxiii. 1.

† This is Branno, the father of Everallin, and grand-  
father to Oscar; he was of Irish extraction and  
lord of the country round the lake of Lego. — His  
great actions are handed down by tradition, and  
his hospitality has passed into a proverb.

from the wall ; his eyes were filled with tears. Red was the cheek of youth. His voice was trembling, low. My spear shook its bright head in his hand : he spoke to Morven's king.

Fingal ! thou king of heroes ! Ossian, next to him in war ! ye have fought the battle in your youth ; your names are renowned in song. --- Oscar is like the mist of Cona : I appear and vanish. --- The bard will not know my name. --- The hunter will not search in the heath for my tomb. Let me fight, O heroes, in the battles of Inis-thona. Distant is the land of my war ! --- ye shall not hear of Oscar's fall. ——— Some bard may find me there, and give my name to the song. --- The daughter of the stranger shall see my tomb, and weep over the youth that came from afar. The bard shall say, at the feast, hear the song of Oscar from the distant land.

Oscar, replied the king of Morven ; thou shalt fight, son of my fame ! --- Prepare my dark-bosomed ship to carry my hero to Inis-thona. Son of my son, regard our fame ; --- for thou art of the race of renown. Let not the children of strangers say, feeble are the sons of Morven ! ——— Be thou, in battle, like the roaring storm : mild as the evening  
sun

fun in peace. --- Tell, Oscar, to Inis-thona's king, that Fingal remembers his youth; when we strove in the combat together in the days of Agandecca.

They lifted up the sounding sail; the wind whistled through the thongs \* of their masts. Waves lashed the oozy rocks: the strength of ocean roared. — My son beheld, from the wave, the land of groves. He rushed into the echoing bay of Runa; and sent his sword to Annir king of spears.

The gray-haired hero rose, when he saw the sword of Fingal. His eyes were full of tears, and he remembered the battles of their youth. Twice they lifted the spear before the lovely Agandecca: heroes stood far distant, as if two ghosts contended.

But now, begun the king, I am old; the sword lies useless in my hall. Thou who art of Morven's race! Annir has been in the strife of spears; but he is pale and withered now, like the oak of Lano. I have no son to meet thee with joy, or to carry thee to the halls of his fathers. Argon is pale in the tomb, and Ruro is no more. --- My daughter is in the hall  
of

\* Leather thongs were used in Ossian's time, instead of ropes,



of strangers, and longs to behold my tomb. —

Her spouse shakes ten thousand spears; and comes \*  
like a cloud of death from Lano. --- Come thou,  
to share the feast of Annir, son of echoing Morven.

Three days they feasted together; on the fourth  
Annir heard the name of Oscar †. --- They rejoiced

\* Cormalo had resolved on a war against his father-in-law Annir king of Inis-thona, in order to deprive him of his kingdom: the injustice of his designs was so much resented by Fingal, that he sent his grandson, Oscar, to the assistance of Annir. Both armies came soon to a battle, in which the conduct and valour of Oscar obtained a complete victory. An end was put to the war by the death of Cormalo, who fell in a single combat, by Oscar's hand. — Thus is the story delivered down by tradition; though the poet, to raise the character of his son, makes Oscar himself propose the expedition.

† It was thought, in those days of heroism, an infringement upon the laws of hospitality, to ask the name of a stranger, before he had feasted three days in the great hall of the family. *He that asks*

### 34 THE WAR OF INIS-THONA :

ced in the shell \* ; and pursued the boars of Runa.

Beside the fount of mossy stones, the weary heroes rest. The tear steals in secret from Annir: and he broke the rising sigh. — Here darkly rest, the hero said, the children of my youth. — This stone is the tomb of Ruro : that tree sounds over the grave of Argon. Do ye hear my voice, O my sons, within your narrow house? Or do ye speak in these rustling leaves, when the winds of the desert rise?

King of Inis-thona, said Oscar, how fell the children of youth? The wild boar often rushes over their tombs, but he does not disturb the hunters. They pursue deer † formed of clouds, and bend  
their

*the name of the stranger*, is, to this day, an opprobrious term applied, in the north, to the inhospitable.

\* *To rejoice in the shell* is a phrase for feasting sumptuously and drinking freely. I have observed in a preceding note, that the ancient Scots drunk in shells.

† The notion of Ossian concerning the state of the deceased, was the same with that of the ancient  
Greeks

their airy bow. --- They still love the sport of their youth; and mount the wind with joy.

Cor-

Greeks and Romans. They imagined that the souls pursued, in their separate state, the employments and pleasures of their former life.

*Arma procul, curvæque virum miratur inanes,  
Stant terra defixæ hastæ, passimque soluti  
Per campum pascuntur equi, quæ gratia currum  
Armorumque fuit vivis; quæ cura nitentes  
Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repostos.*

VIRG.

The chief beheld their chariots from afar;  
Their shining arms and courfers train'd to war:  
Their lances fix'd in earth, their steeds around,  
Free from the harness, graze the flow'ry ground,  
The love of horses which they had, alive,  
And care of chariots, after death survive.

DRYDEN.

Τὸν δέ μετ' εἰσενόησαν βίην Ἡρακλεΐν,  
Εἰδωλον. —

— ὁδ', εἰς νυκτὶ εἰκώς  
Γυμνον τόξον ἔχων, καὶ ἐπὶ νευρῆφιν οἷσ' ὄν  
Δεινὸν παπταίνων, αἰεὶ βαλλέοντι εἰκώς, &c.

HOM. Odys. 11.

C 2

Now

36 THE WAR OF INIS-THONA:

\* Cormalo, replied the king, is chief of ten thousand spears; he dwells at the dark-rolling waters of Lano \*; which send forth the cloud of death. He came to Runa's echoing halls, and fought the honour of the spear †. The youth was lovely as the first beam

Now I the strength of Hercules behold,  
A tow'ring spectre of gigantic mold;  
Gleomy as night he stands in act to throw  
Th' aerial arrow from the twanging bow.  
Around his breast a wond'rous zone is roll'd  
Where woodland monsters grin in fretted gold,  
There sullen lions sternly seem to roar,  
The bear to growl, to foam the tusked boar,  
There war and havock and destruction flood,  
And vengeful murder red with human blood.

POPE.

\* Lano was a lake of Scandinavia, remarkable, in the days of Ossian, for emitting a pestilential vapour in autumn. *And thou, O valiant Duchomar, like the mist of marshy Lano; when it sails over the plains of autumn, and brings death to the people.*

FINGAL, B. I.

† By *the honour of the spear* is meant a kind of tournament practised among the ancient northern nations.

beam of the sun; and few were they who could meet him in fight! --- My heroes yielded to Cormalo; and my daughter loved the son of Lano.

Argon and Ruro returned from the chase; the tears of their pride descended: --- They rolled their silent eyes on Runa's heroes, because they yielded to a stranger: three days they feasted with Cormalo: on the fourth my Argon fought. --- But who could fight with Argon! --- Lano's chief was overcome. His heart swelled with the grief of pride, and he resolved, in secret, to behold the death of my sons.

They went to the hills of Runa, and pursued the dark-brown hinds. The arrow of Cormalo flew in secret; and my children fell. He came to the maid of his love; to Inis-thona's dark-haired maid. --- They fled over the desert --- and Annir remained alone.

Night came on and day appeared; nor Argon's voice, nor Ruro's came. At length their much-loved dog is seen; the fleet and bounding Runar. He came into the hall and howled; and seemed to look towards the place of their fall. --- We followed him: we found them here; and laid them by this mossy stream. This is the haunt of Annir, when the



38 THE WAR OF INIS - THONA:

chace of the hinds is over. I bend like the trunk of an aged oak above them: and my tears for ever flow.

O Ronnan! said the rising Oscar, Ogar king of spears! call my heroes to my side, the sons of streamy Morven. To-day we go to Lano's water, that sends forth the cloud of death. Cormalo will not long rejoice: death is often at the point of our swords.

They came over the desert like stormy clouds, when the winds roll them over the heath: their edges are tinged with lightning: and the echoing groves foresee the storm. The horn of Oscar's battle was heard; and Lano shook in all its waves. The children of the lake convened around the sounding shield of Cormalo.

Oscar fought, as he was wont in battle. Cormalo fell beneath his sword: and the sons of the dismal Lano fled to their secret vales. — Oscar brought the daughter of Inis-thona to Annir's echoing halls. The face of age was bright with joy; he blest the king of swords.

How great was the joy of Ossian, when he beheld the distant sail of his son! it was like a cloud of light that rises in the east, when the traveller is sad  
in

in a land unknown; and dismal night, with her ghosts,  
is sitting around him.

We brought him, with songs, to Selma's halls.  
Fingal ordered the feast of shells to be spread. A thou-  
sand bards raised the name of Oscar: and Morven an-  
swered to the noise. The daughter of Toscar was there,  
and her voice was like the harp; when the distant  
sound comes, in the evening, on the soft-rustling  
breeze of the vale.

O lay me, ye that see the light, near some rock  
of my hills: let the thick hazels be around, let the  
rustling oak be near. Green be the place of my rest;  
and let the sound of the distant torrent be heard.  
Daughter of Toscar, take the harp, and raise the  
lovely song of Selma; that sleep may overtake my  
soul in the midst of joy; that the dreams of my youth  
may return, and the days of the mighty Fingal.

Selma! I behold thy towers, thy trees, and  
shaded wall. I see the heroes of Morven; and hear  
the song of bards. Oscar lifts the sword of Cormalo;  
and a thousand youths admire its studded thongs.  
They look with wonder on my son; and admire the  
strength of his arm. They mark the joy of his fa-  
ther's eyes; they long for an equal fame.

40 THE WAR OF INIS-THONA: A POEM.

And ye shall have your fame, O sons of streamy  
Morven. --- My soul is often brightened with the  
song; and I remember the companions of my youth.

—— But sleep descends with the sound of the harp;  
and pleasant dreams begin to rise. Ye sons of the  
chace stand far distant, nor disturb my rest. The  
bard of other times converses now with his fathers,  
the chiefs of the days of old. --- Sons of the cha-  
ce, stand far distant; disturb not the dreams of  
Ossian.

---

THE

THE  
BATTLE OF LORA:  
A POEM \*.

---

Son of the distant land, who dwellest in the secret  
cell ! do I hear the sounds of thy grove ? or  
is it the voice of thy songs ? The torrent was loud  
in

\* This poem is compleat ; nor does it appear from tradition, that it was introduced, as an episode, into any of Ossian's great works. — It is called, in the original, *Duan a Chuldich*, or the *Culdee's poem*, because it was addressed to one of the first Christian missionaries, who were called, from their retired life, Culdees, or *sequestered persons* — The story bears a near resemblance to that which was the foundation of the Iliad. Fingal, on his return from Ireland, after he had expelled Swaran from that kingdom, made a feast to all his heroes : he forgot to invite Ma-ronnan and Aldo, two chiefs, who had not been along with him on his expedition. They resented his neglect ; and went over to

## 42 THE BATTLE OF LORA :

in my ear, but I heard a tuneful voice; dost thou praise the chiefs of thy land; or the spirits \* of the wind? -- But, lonely dweller of the rock! look over that heathy plain: thou seest green tombs, with their rank, whistling grass; with their stones of mossy heads: thou seest them, son of the rock, but Ossian's eyes have failed.

A mountain-stream comes roaring down and sends its waters round a green hill: four mossy stones, in the midst of withered grass, rear their heads on the top: two trees, which the storms have bent, spread

Erragon king of Sora, a country of Scandinavia, the declared enemy of Fingal. The valour of Aldo soon gained him a great reputation in Sora: and Lorma the beautiful wife of Erragon fell in love with him. — He found means to escape with her, and to come to Fingal, who resided then in Selma on the western coast. — Erragon invaded Scotland, and was slain in battle by Gaul the son of Morni, after he had rejected terms of peace offered him by Fingal. — In this war Aldo fell, in a single combat, by the hands of his rival Erragon; and the unfortunate Lorma afterwards died of grief.



spread their whistling branches around. — This is thy dwelling, Erragon \*; this thy narrow house: the sound of thy shells has been long forgot in Sora: and thy shield is become dark in thy hall. — Erragon, king of ships! chief of distant Sora! how hast thou fallen on our mountains †! How is the mighty low!

Son of the secret cell! dost thou delight in songs? Hear the battle of Lora; the sound of its steel is long since past. So thunder on the darkened hill roars and is no more. The sun returns with his silent beams: the glittering rocks, and green heads of the mountains smile.

The

\* Erragon, or Ferg-thonn, signifies *the rage of the waves*; probably a poetical name given him by Ossian himself; for he goes by the name of Annir in tradition.

† The beauty of Israel is slain on thy high places: how are the mighty fallen!

2 SAM. ii. 19.

How are the mighty fallen in the mids of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places.

2 SAM. ii. 25.

#### 44 THE BATTLE OF LORA:

The bay of Cona received our ships \*\*, from Ullin's rolling waves: our white sheets hung loose to the masts: and the boisterous winds roared behind the groves of Morven. — The horn of the king is sounded, and the deer start from their rocks. Our arrows flew in the woods; the feast of the hill was spread. Our joy was great on our rocks, for the fall of the terrible Swaran.

Two heroes were forgot at our feast; and the rage of their bosoms burned. They rolled their red eyes in secret: the sigh burst from their breasts. They were seen to talk together, and to throw their spears on earth. They were two dark clouds, in the mist of our joy; like pillars of mist on the settled sea: it glitters to the sun, but the mariners fear a storm.

Raise my white sails, said Ma-ronnan, raise them to the winds of the west; let us rush, O Aldo, through the foam of the northern wave. We are forgot at the feast: but our arms have been red in blood. Let us leave the hills of Fingal, and serve the king of Sora. — His countenance is fierce,  
and

\* This was at Fingal's return from his war against Swaran.

and the war darkens round his spear. Let us be renowned, O Aldo, in the battles of echoing Sora.

They took their swords and shields of thongs; and rushed to Lumar's sounding bay. They came to Sora's haughty king, the chief of bounding steeds. — Erragon had returned from the chace: his spear was red in blood. He bent his dark face to the ground: and whistled as he went. — He took the strangers to his feasts: they fought and conquered in his wars.

Aldo returned with his fame towards Sora's lofty walls. — From her tower looked the spouse of Erragon, the humid, rolling eyes of Lorma. — Her dark-brown hair flies on the wind of ocean: her white breast heaves, like snow on the heath; when the gentle winds arise, and slowly move it in the light. She saw young Aldo, like the beam of Sora's setting sun. Her soft heart sighed: tears filled her eyes; and her white arm supported her heed.

Three days she sat within the hall, and covered grief with joy. — On the fourth she fled with the hero, along the rolling sea. — They came to Gona's mossy towers, to Fingal king of spears.

Aldo

## 46 THE BATTLE OF LORA:

Aldo of the heart of pride ! said the rising king  
 of Morven, shall I defend thee from the wrath of  
 Sora's injured king ? who will now receive my peo-  
 ple into their halls, or give the feast of strangers, sin-  
 ce Aldo, of the little soul, has carried away the fair  
 of Sora ? Go to thy hills, thou feeble hand, and  
 hide thee in thy caves ; mournful is the battle we must  
 fight, with Sora's gloomy king. — Spirit of the  
 noble Trenmor ! when will Fingal cease to fight ? I  
 was born in the midst of battles \*, and my steps  
 must move in blood to my tomb. But my hand did  
 not injure the weak, my steel did not touch the feeble  
 in arms. --- I behold thy tempests, O Morven, which  
 will overturn my halls ; when my children are dead  
 in battle, and none remains to dwell in Selma. Then  
 will the feeble come, but they will not know my  
 tomb : my renown is in the song : and my actions  
 shall be as a dream to future times.

His people gathered around Erragon, as the  
 storms round the ghost of night ; when he calls them  
 from

\* Comhal the Father of Fingal was slain in battle,  
 against the tribe of Morni, the very day that Fin-  
 gal was born ; so that he may, with propriety, be  
 said to have been *born in the midst of battles*.

from the top of Morven, and prepares to pour them on the land of the stranger. — He came to the shore of Cona, and sent his bard to the king; to demand the combat of thousands; or the land of many hills.

Fingal sat in his hall with the companions of his youth around him. The young heroes were at the chase, and far distant in the desert. The gray-haired chiefs talked of other times, and of the actions of their youth; when the aged Narthmor \* came, the king! of streamy Lora.

This is no time, begun the chief, to hear the songs of other years: Erragon frowns on the coast, and lifts ten thousand swords. Gloomy is the king among his chiefs! he is like the darkened moon, amidst the meteors of night.

Come, said Fingal, from thy hall, thou daughter of my love; come from thy hall, Bosmina †, maid of streamy Morven! Narthmor, take the steeds \*\* of

\* Neart-mór, *great strenght.* Lora, *noisy.*

† Bos-mhina, *soft and tender hand.* She was the youngest of Fingal's children.

\*\* These were probably horses taken in the incursions of the Caledonians into the Roman province, which



48 THE BATTLE OF LORA:

of the strangers, and attend the daughter of Fingal: let her bid the king of Sora to our feast, to Selma's shaded wall. — Offer him, O Boëna, the peace of heroes, and the wealth of generous Aldo: our youths are far distant, and age is on our trembling hands.

She came to the host of Erragon, like a beam of light to a cloud. — In her right hand shone an arrow of gold; and in her left a sparkling shell, the sign of Morven's peace. — Erragon brightened in her presence as a rock, before the sudden beams of the sun; when they issue from a broken cloud, divided by the roaring wind.

Son of the distant Sora, begun the mildly blushing maid, come to the feast of Morven's king, to Selma's shaded walls. Take the peace of heroes, O warrior, and let the dark sword rest by thy side. — And if thou chusest the wealth of kings, hear the words of the generous Aldo. — He gives to Erragon an hundred steeds, the children of the rein: an hundred maids from distant lands; an hundred hawks with fluttering wing, that fly across the sky.

An

which seems to be intimated in the phrase of the  
*steeds of strangers.*

An hundred girdles \* shall also be thine, to bind  
 high-bosomed women; the friends of the births of  
 heroes, and the cure of the sons of toil. --- Ten  
 shells studded with gems shall shine in Sora's towers:  
 the blue water trembles on their stars, and seems to  
 be sparkling wine. — They gladdened once the  
 kings of the world \*\*, in the midst of their echoing  
 halls. These, O hero, shall be thine; or thy white-  
 bosomed spouse. — Lorma shall roll her  
 bright eyes in thy halls; though Fingal loves the ge-  
 neros Aldo: --- Fingal! --- who never injured a he-  
 ro, though his arm is strong.

Soft

\* Sanctified girdles, till very lately, were kept in  
 many families in the north of Scotland; they were  
 bound about women in labour, and were supposed  
 to alleviate their pains, and to accelerate the birth.  
 They were impressed with several mystical figures,  
 and the ceremony of binding them about the wo-  
 man's waist, was accompanied with words and ges-  
 tures which shewed the custom to have come  
 originally from the druids.

\*\* The Roman emperors. These shells were some  
 of the spoils of the province.

50 THE BATTLE OF LORA:

Soft voice of Cona ! replied the king, tell him, that he spreads his feast in vain. — Let Fingal pour his spoils around me ; and bend beneath my power. Let him give me the swords of his fathers, and the shields of other times ; that my children may behold them in my halls, and say, “ These are the arms of Fingal. “

Never shall they behold them in thy halls, said the rising pride of the maid ; they are in the mighty hands of heroes who never yielded in war. --- King of the echoing Sora ! the storm is gathering on our hills. Dost thou not foresee the fall of thy people, son of the distant land ?

She came to Selma's silent halls ; the king beheld her down-cast eyes. He rose from his place, in his strength, and shook his aged locks. — He took the sounding mail of Trenmor, and the dark-brown shield of his fathers. Darkness filled Selma's hall, when he stretched his hand to his spear : --- the ghosts of thousands were near, and foresaw the death of the people. Terrible joy rose in the face of the aged heroes : they rushed to meet the foe ; their thoughts are on the  
actions

actions of other years : and on the fame of the tomb.

Now the dogs of the chace appeared at Trathal's tomb : Fingal knew that his young heroes followed them, and he ftopt in the midft of his courfe. — Oscar appeared the firft ; --- then Morni's fon, and Nemi's race : --- Fercuth \* fhewed his gloomy form : Dermid fpread his dark hair on the wind. Oſſian came the laft. O fon of the rock †, I hummed the fong of other times : my fpear fupported my fteps over the little freams, and my thoughts were of mighty men. Fingal ftruck his boſſy ſhield ; and gave the diſmal ſign of war ; a thouſand fwords \*\*, at once unfheathed, gleam on the waving heath. Three gray-haired fons of fong raife the tuneful, mournful voice. — Deep and dark with founding

\* Fear-cuth, the ſame with Fergus, *the man of the word*, or a commander of an army.

† The poet addreſſes himſelf to the Culdee.

\*\* He ſpake ; and to confirm his words out-flew,  
Millions of flaming fwords, drawn from the thighs  
Of mighty Cherubim ; the fudden blaze  
Far round illumin'd hell.

MILTON,



## 52 THE BATTLE OF LORA:

ding steps, we rush, a gloomy ridge, along: like the shower of a storm when it pours on the narrow vale.

The king of Morven sat on his hill: the sun-beam \* of battle flew on the wind: the companions of his youth are near, with all their waving locks of age. — Joy rose in the heroes eyes when he beheld his sons in war; when he saw them amidst the lightning of swords, and mindful of the deeds of their fathers. — Erragon came on, in his strength, like the roar of a winter stream: the battle falls in his course, and death is at his side.

Who comes, said Fingal, like the bounding roe, like the hart of echoing Cona? His shield glitters on his side; and the clang of his armour is mournful. — He meets with Erragon in the strife! — Behold the battle of the chiefs! — it is like the contending of ghosts in a gloomy storm. — But fallest thou, son of the hill, and is thy white bosom stained with blood? Weep, unhappy Lorma, Aldo is no more.

The

- I have observed in a former note, that the standard of Fingal was called the sun-beam from its being studded with stones and gold.



The king took the spear of his strength; for he was sad for the fall of Aldo: he bent his deathful eyes on the foe; but Gaul met the king of Sora. — Who can relate the fight of the chiefs? — The mighty stranger fell.

Sons of Cona! Finga! cried aloud, stop the hand of death. — Mighty was he that is now so low! and much is he mourned in Sora! The stranger will come towards his hall, and wonder why it is silent. The king is fallen, O stranger, and the joy of his house is ceased. — Listen to the sound of his woods: perhaps his ghost is there; but he is far distant, on Morven, beneath the sword of a foreign foe.

Such were the words of Fingal, when the bard raised the song of peace; we stopped our uplifted swords, and spared the feeble foe. We laid Erragon in that tomb; and I raised the voice of grief: the clouds of night came rolling down, and the ghost of Erragon appeared to some. — His face was cloudy and dark; and an half-formed sigh is in his breast. — Blest be thy soul, O king of Sora! thine arm was terrible in war!

## 54 THE BATTLE OF LORA:

Lorma sat, in Aldo's hall, at the light of a flaming oak: the night came, but he did not return; and the soul of Lorma is sad. -- What detains thee, hunter of Cona? for thou didst promise to return. — Has the deer been distant far; and do the dark winds sigh, round thee, on the heath? I am in the land of strangers, where is my friend, but Aldo? Come from thy echoing hills, O my best beloved!

Her eyes are turned toward the gate, and she listens to the rustling blast. She thinks it is Aldo's tread, and joy rises in her face; -- but sorrow returns again, like a thin cloud on the moon. — And thou wilt not return, my love? Let me behold the face of the hill. The moon is in the east. Calm and bright is the breast of the lake! When shall I hear his voice, loud and distant on the wind? Come from thy echoing hills, hunter of woody Cona!

His thin ghost appeared, on a rock, like the watry beam of the moon, when it rushes from between two clouds, and the midnight shower is on the field. — She followed the empty form over the heath, for she knew that her hero fell. -- I heard her approaching cries on the wind, like the mournful voice of the breeze, when it sighs on the grass of the cave.

She

She came, she found her hero : her voice was heard no more : silent she rolled her sad eyes ; she was pale as a watry cloud , that rises from the lake , to the beam of the moon.

Few were her days on Cona : she sunk into the tomb : Fingal commanded his bards ; and they sung over the death of Lorma. The daughters \* of Morven mourned her for one day in the year, when the dark winds of autumn returned.

Son of the distant land †, thou dwellest in the field of fame : O let thy song rise, at times, in the praise of those that fell : that their thin ghosts may rejoice around thee ; and the soul of Lorma come on a moon-beam ††, when thou liest down to rest, and the moon looks into thy cave. Then shalt thou see her lovely ; but the tear is still on her cheek.

CON-

\* The daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.  
JUDGES XI. 40.

† The poet addresses himself to the Culdee.

†† Be thou on a moon-beam, O Morna, near the window of my rest ; when my thoughts are of peace ; and the din of arms is over.

# CONLATH AND CUTHÓNA:

## A P O E M \*.

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**D**id not Ossian hear a voice? or is it the sound  
of days that are no more? Often does the  
memory of former times come, like the evening sun  
on

- \* Conlath was the youngest of Morni's sons, and brother to the celebrated Gaul, who is so often mentioned in Ossian's poems. He was in love with Cuthóna the daughter of Rumar, when Toscar the son of Kinfena, accompanied by Fercutli his friend, from Ireland, at Mora where Conlath dwelt. He was hospitably received, and according to the custom of the times, feasted, three days with Conlath. On the fourth he set sail, and coasting the *island of waves*, probably one of the Hebrides, he saw Cuthóna hunting, fell in love with her, and carried her away, by force, in his ship. He was forced, by stress of weather, into I-thona a desert Isle. In the mean time Conlath, hearing of the rape, sailed after him, and found him on the point

of



CONLATH AND CUTHONA: A POEM. 57

on my soul. The noise of the chase is renewed; and, in thought, I lift the spear. — But Ossian did hear a voice: Who art thou, son of the night? The sons of little men are asleep, and the midnight wind is in my hall. Perhaps it is the shield of Fingal that echoes to the blast, it hangs in Ossian's hall, and he feels it sometimes with his hands. — Yes! — I hear thee, my friend: long has thy voice been absent from mine ear! What brings thee, on thy cloud, to Ossian, son of the generous Morni? Are the friends

of sailing for the coast of Ireland. They fought; and they, and their followers fell by mutual wounds. Cuthóna did not long survive: for she died of grief the third day after. Fingal, hearing of their unfortunate death, sent Stormal the son of Moran to bury them, but forgot to send a bard to sing the funeral song over their tombs. The ghost of Conlath came, long after, to Ossian, to intreat him to transmit, to posterity, his and Cuthóna's fame. For it was the opinion of the times, that the souls of the deceased were not happy, till their elegies were composed by a bard. — Thus is the story of the poem handed down by tradition.



## 58 CONLATH AND CUTHONA:

friends of the aged near thee? Where is Oſcar, ſon  
of fame? --- He was often near thee, O Conlath,  
when the din of battle roſe.

### GHOST OF CONLATH.

Sleeps the ſweet voice of Cona, in the miſt of  
his ruſtling hall? Sleeps Oſſian in his hall, and his  
friends without their fame? The ſea rolls round the  
dark I-thona \*, and our tombs are not ſeen by the  
ſtranger. How long ſhall our fame be unheard, ſon  
of the echoing Morven?

### OSSIAN.

O that mine eyes could behold thee, as thou  
ſitteſt, dim, on thy cloud! Art thou like the miſt  
of Lano; or an half-extinguish'd meteor? Of what  
are the ſkirts of thy robe? Of what is thine airy  
bow? — But he is gone on his blaſt like the  
ſhadow of miſt. --- Come from thy wall, my harp,  
and let me hear thy ſound. Let the light of memory  
riſe on I-thona; that I may behold my friends. And  
Oſſian does behold his friends, on the dark-blue iſle.  
--- The cave of Thona appears, with its moſſy rocks  
and

\* I-thonn, *iſland of waves*, one of the uninhabited  
weſtern iſles.

and bending trees. A stream roars at its mouth, and  
Toscar bends over its course. Fercuth is sad by his  
side: and the maid \* of his love sits at a distance,  
and weeps. Does the wind of the waves deceive me?  
Or do I hear them speak?

T O S C A R.

The night was stormy. From their hills the groa-  
ning oaks came down. The sea darkly-tumbled be-  
neath the blast, and the roaring waves were climbing  
against our rocks. --- The lightning came often and  
shewed the blasted fern. --- Fercuth! I saw the ghost  
of nigh†. Silent he stood, on that bank; his robe  
of mist flew on the wind. --- I could behold his tears:  
an aged man he seemed, and full of thought.

F E R C U T H.

It was thy father, O Toscar; and he foresees  
some death among his race. Such was his appearan-

ce

\* Cuthóna the daughter of Rumar, whom Toscar had  
carried away by force.

† It was long thought, in the north of Scotland, that  
storms were raised by the ghosts of the deceased.  
This notion is still entertained by the vulgar; for  
they think that whirlwinds, and sudden squalls of  
wind

## 60 CONLATH AND CUTHONA:

ce on Cromla, before the great Ma-ronnan \* fell.  
 — Ullin! † with thy hills of grass, how pleasant are thy vales! Silence is near thy blue streams, and the sun is on thy fields. Soft is the sound of the harp in Seláma ††, and pleasant the cry of the hunter on Crómia. But we are in the dark I-thona, surrounded by the storm. The billows lift their white heads above our rocks: and we tremble amidst the night.

### TOSCAR.

Whither is the soul of battle fled, Fercuth with the locks of age? I have seen thee undaunted in danger, and thine eyes burning with joy in the fight. Whither is the soul of battle fled? Our fathers never feared. — Go: view the settling sea: the stormy  
 wind

wind are occasioned by spirits, who transport themselves, in that manner, from one place to another.

\* Ma-ronnan was the brother of Toscar: the translator has a poem in his possession concerning the extraordinary death of that hero.

† Ulster in Ireland.

†† Selámath — *beautiful to behold*, the name of Toscar's palace, on the coast of Ulster, near the mountain Cromla the scene of the epic poem.

wind is laid. The billows still tremble \* on the deep,  
and seem to fear the blast. But view the settling sea:  
morning is gray on our rocks. The sun will look  
soon from his east; in all his pride of light.

I lifted up my sails, with joy, before the halls  
of generous Conlath. My course was by the isle of  
waves, where his love pursued the deer. I saw her,  
like that beam of the sun that issues from the cloud.  
Her hair was on her heaving breast; she, bending  
forward, drew the bow: her white arm seemed, be-  
hind her, like the snow of Cromla: — Come  
to my soul, I said, thou huntress of the isle of waves!  
But she spends her time in tears, and thinks of the  
generous Conlath. Where can I find thy peace,  
Cuthona, lovely maid!

## CU - THONA †.

A distant steep bends over the sea, with aged  
trees and mossy rocks: the billows roll at its feet: on  
its

\* — the face of ocean sleeps,

And a still horror saddens all the deeps.

POPE'S Homer.

† Cu - thona, *the mournful sound of the waves*; a poet-  
ical name given her by Ossian, on account of her  
mourning to the sound of the waves; her name in  
tradition is Gorm - huil, *the blue - eyed maid*.



62 CONLATH AND CUTONA:

its side is the dwelling of roes. The people call it Ardven. There the towers of Mora rise. There Conlath looks over the sea for his only love. The daughters of the chace returned, and he beheld their downcast eyes. Where is the daughter of Rumar? But they answered not. --- My peace dwells on Ardven, son of the distant land!

TOSCAR.

And Cuthona shall return to her peace; to the halls of generous Conlath. He is the friend of Toscar: I have feasted in his halls. --- Rise, ye gentle breezes of Ullin, and stretch my sails towards Ardven's shores. Cuthona shall rest on Ardven: but the days of Toscar will be sad. --- I shall sit in my cave in the field of the sun. The blast will rustle in my trees, and I shall think it is Cuthona's voice. But she is distant far, in the halls of the mighty Conlath.

CUTHONA.

Oh! what cloud is that? It carries the ghosts of my fathers. I see the skirts of their robes, like gray and watry mist. When shall I fall, O Rumar? --- Sad Cuthona sees her death. Will not Conlath behold me, before I enter the narrow house? \*

OSSIAN.

\* The grave.



## O S S I A N.

And he will behold thee, O maid : he comes  
 along the rolling sea. The death of Toscar is dark  
 on his spear ; and a wound is in his side. He is pale  
 at the cave of Thona, and shews his ghastly wound \*.  
 Where art thou with thy tears, Cuthona ? the chief  
 of Mora dies. — The vision grows dim on my  
 mind : --- I behold the chiefs no more. But, O ye  
 bards of future times, remember the fall of Conlath  
 with tears : he fell before his day † ; and sadness  
 darkened in his hall. His mother looked to his shield  
 on the wall, and it was bloody ††. She knew that  
 her hero died, and her sorrow was heard on Mora.

Art

\* ——— *inbumati venit imago**Conjugis, ora modis adtollens pallida miris :**Crudelis aras, trajectaque pectora ferro**Nudavit. ———*

V I R G.

——— the ghost appears

Of her unhappy Lord : the spectre stares,  
 And with erected eyes his bloody bosom bares.

D R Y D E N.

† *Nam quia nec fato, merita nec morte peribat,**Sed misera ante diem, &c.*

V I R G.

†† It was the opinion of the times, that the arms  
 lost

## 64 CONLATH AND CUTHONA: A POEM.

Art thou pale on thy rock, Cuthona, beside the fallen chiefs? The night comes, and the day returns, but none appears to raise their tomb. Thou frightnest the screaming fowls \* away, and thy tears for ever flow. Thou art pale as a watry cloud, that rises from a lake.

The sons of the desert came, and they found her dead. They raise a tomb over the heroes; and she rests at the side of Conlath. --- Come not to my dreams, O Conlath; for thou hast received thy fame. Be thy voice far distant from my hall; that sleep may descend at night. O that I could forget my friends: till my footsteps cease to be seen! till I come among them with joy! and lay my aged limbs in the narrow house!

CAR.

left by the heroes at home, became bloody the very instant their owners were killed, though at ever so great a distance.

\* The situation of Cuthona is like that of Rizpah, Saul's mistress, who sat by her sons after they had been hanged by the Gibeonites.

And Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of the harvest until water dropped on them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of prey by night.

2 SAM. XXI. 10.

# CARTHON\* :

## A P O E M.

---

A tale of the times of old ! The deeds of days  
of other years ! --- The murmur of thy stre-  
ams, O Lora, brings back the memory of the past.  
The

- This poem is compleat, and the subject of it, as of most of Ossian's compositions, tragical. In the time of Comhal the son of Trathal, and father of the celebrated Fingal, Clefsámmor the son of Thaddu and brother of Morna, Fingal's mother, was driven by a storm into the river Clyde, on the banks of which stood Balclutha, a town belonging to the Britons between the walls. He was hospitably received by Reuthámir, the principal man in the place, who gave him Moina his only daughter in marriage. Reuda, the son of Cormo, a Briton who was in love with Moina, came to Reuthámir's house, and behaved haughtily towards Clefsámmor. A quarrel ensued, in which Reuda was killed ; the Britons, who attended him pressed so hard on Clefsámmor, that he was obliged to throw

E

him.

The sound of thy woods, Garmallar, is lovely in mine ear. Dost thou not behold, Malvina, a rock with its head of heath? Three aged firs bend from its face; green is the narrow plain at its feet; there the

himself into the Clyde, and swim to his ship. He hoisted sail, and the wind being favourable, bore him out to sea. He often endeavoured to return, and carry off his beloved Moina by night; but the wind continuing contrary, he was forced to desist.

Moina, who had been left with child by her husband, brought forth a son, and died soon after. — Reuthámir named the child Carthon, *i. e.* *the murmur of waves*, from the storm which carried off Clefsámmor his father, who was supposed to have been cast away. When Carthon was three years old, Comhal the father of Fingal, in one of his expeditions against the Britons, took and burnt Balclutha. Reuthámir was killed in the attack; and Carthon was carried safe away by his nurse, who fled farther into the country of the Britons. Carthon, coming to man's estate was resolved to revenge the fall of Balclutha on Comhal's posterity. He set sail, from the Clyde, and, falling on the coast



the flower of the mountain grows, and shakes its white head in the breeze. The thistle is there alone, and sheds its aged beard. Two stores, half sunk in the ground, shew their heads of moss. The deer of the mountain avoids the place, for he beholds the gray ghost that guards it \*: for the mighty lie, O Malvina, in the narrow plain of the rock. A tale of the times of old! the deeds of days of other years!

Who comes from the land of strangers, with his thousands around him? the sun-beam pours its bright stream before him; and his air meets the wind  
of

coast of Morven, defeated two of Fingal's heroes, who came to oppose his progress. He was, at last, unwittingly killed by his father Clessámmor, in a single combat. This story is the foundation of the present poem, which opens on the night preceding the death of Carthon, so that what passed before is introduced by way of episode. The poem is addressed to Malvina the daughter of Toscar.

- \* It was the opinion of the times, that deer saw the ghosts of the dead. To this day, when beasts suddenly start without any apparent cause, the vulgar think that they see the spirits of the deceased.



of his hills. His face is settled from war. He is calm as the evening beam that looks, from the cloud of the west, on Cona's silent vale. Who is it but Comhal's son \*, the king of mighty deeds ! He beholds his hills with joy, and bids a thousand voices rise. — Ye have fled over your fields, ye sons of the distant land ! The king of the world sits in his hall, and hears of his people's flight. He lifts his red eye of pride, and takes his father's sword. Ye have fled over your fields, sons of the distant land !

Such were the words of the bards, when they came to Selma's halls. --- A thousand lights † from the stranger's land rose, in the midst of the people. The feast is spread around ; and the night passed away in joy. --- Where is the noble Clefsámmor †† said the fair-haired Fingal ? Where is the companion of my father, in the days of my joy ? Sullen and dark  
he

• Fingal returns here, from an expedition against the Romans, which was celebrated by Ossian in a particular poem which is in the translator's possession.

† Probably wax-lights; which are often mentioned as carried, among other booty, from the Roman province.

†† Clefsamh-mór, *mighty deeds*,

he passes his days in the vale of echoing Lora: but, behold, he comes from the hill, like a steed \* in his strength, who finds his companions in the breeze;  
and

\* Hast thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength. J O B.

Ὡς δ' ὅτε τις στατὸς ἵππος ἀκυσήσας ἐπε-  
φατνῇ,

Δεσμὸν ἀπορρήξας; &c. H O M. II. 6.

The wanton courser thus with reins unbound,  
Breaks from his stall, and beats the trembling ground;  
His head, now freed, he tosses to the skies;  
His mane dishevel'd o'er his shoulders flies;  
He snuffs the females in the distant plain,  
And springs, exulting. P O P E.

*Qualis ubi abruptis fugit præsepia vinculis  
Tandem liber equus, campoque potitus aperto,  
— Ille in pastus armentaque tendit equarum:  
—— arreptisque fremit cervicibus altè  
Luxurians, luduntque Iubæ per colla, per armos.*

V I R G.

Freed from his keepers, thus with broken reins,  
The wanton courser prances o'er the plains:

and tosses his bright mane in the wind. — Blest  
be the soul of Clelsámmor, why so long from Selma?

Returns the chief, said Clelsámmor, in the midst  
of his fame? Such was the renown of Comhal in the  
battles of his youth. Often did we pass over Carun  
to the land of the strangers: our swords returned, not  
unstained with blood: nor did the kings of the world  
rejoice. — Why do I remember the battles of  
my youth? My hair is mixed with gray. My hand  
forgets to bend the bow: and I lift a lighter spear.  
O that my joy would return, as when I first beheld  
the maid; the white bosomed daughter of strangers,  
Moina \* with the dark-blue eyes!

Tell, said the mighty Fingal, the tale of thy  
youthful days. Sorrow, like a cloud on the sun, sha-  
des

Or in the pride of youth o'erleaps the mounds,  
And snuffs the females in forbidden grounds.

— O'er his shoulders flows his waving mane:  
He neighs, he snorts, he bears his head on high.

DRYDEN.

\* Moina, *soft in temper and person*. We find the Bri-  
tish names in this poem derived from the Galic,  
which is a proof that the ancient language of the  
whole island was one and the same.

des the soul of Clefsámmor. Mournful are thy thoughts, alone. on the banks of the roaring Lora. Let us hear the sorrow of thy youth, and the darkness of thy days.

It was in the days of peace, replied the great Clefsámmor, I came, in my bounding ship, to Balclutha's \* wall of towers. The winds had roared behind my sails, and Clutha's † streams received my dark-bosomed vessel. Three days I remained in Rruthámir's halls, and saw that beam of light, his daughter. The joy of the shell went round, and the aged hero gave the fair. Her breasts were like foam on the wave, and her eyes like stars of light: her hair was dark as the raven's wing: her soul was generous and mild. My love for Moina was great: and my heart poured forth in joy.

The

\* Balclutha, *i. e.* the town of Clyde, probably the *Alcluth* of Bede.

† Clutha, or Cluäth, the Galic name of the river Clyde, the signification of the word is *bending*, in allusion to the winding course of that river. From Clutha is derived its Latin name, Glotta.



The son of a stranger came; a chief who loved the white-bosomed Moina. His words were mighty in the hall, and he often half-unsheathed his sword. --- Where, he said, is the mighty Comhal, the restless wanderer \* of the heath? Comes he, with his host, to Balclutha, since Cleisámmor is so bold?

My soul, I replied, O warrior! burns in a light of its own. I stand without fear in the midst of thousands, though the valiant are distant far. --- Stranger! thy words are mighty, for Cleisámmor is alone. But my sword trembles by my side, and longs to glitter in my hand. --- Speak no more of Comhal, son of the winding Clutha!

The strength of his pride arose. We fought; he fell beneath my sword. The banks of Clutha heard his fall, and a thousand spears glittered around. I fought: the strangers prevailed: I plunged into the stream of Clutha. My white sails rose over the waves, and

\* The word in the original here rendered by *restless wanderer*, is *Scuta*, which is the true origin of the *Scoti* of the Romans; an opprobrious name imposed by the Britons, on the Caledonians, on account of the continual incursions into their country.



and I bounded on the dark-blue sea. --- Moina came to the shore, and rolled the red eye of her tears: her dark hair flew on the wind; and I heard her cries. --- Often did I turn my ship! but the winds of the East prevailed. Nor Clutha ever since have I seen: nor Moina of the dark brown hair. --- She fell in Balclutha: for I have seen her ghost. I knew her as she came through the dusky night, along the murmur of Lora: she was like the new moon \* seen through the gathered mist: when the sky pours down its flaky snow, and the world is silent and dark.

Railé \*.

\* *Inter quas Phœniſſa recens a vulnere Dido*

*Errabat ſolva in magna: quam Troius heros*

*Ut primum juxta ſtetit, agnovitque per umbram*

*Obſcuram, qualem primo qui ſurgere menſe*

*Aut videt, aut viſiſſe patat per nubila lunam, &c.*

VIRG.

Not far from theſe Phœnician Dido ſtood,  
Freſh from her wound, her boſom bath'd in blood.  
Whom when the Trojan hero hardly knew  
Obſcure in ſhades, and with a doubtful view,  
Doubtful as he who runs thro' dusky night,  
Or thinks he ſees the moon's uncertain light, &c.

DRYDEN.

E ſ

Raife \*, ye bards, said the mighty Fingal, the praise of unhappy Moina. Call her ghost, with your songs, to our hills; that she may rest with the fair of Morven, the sun-beams of other days, and the delight of heroes of old. --- I have seen the walls † of Balclutha, but they were desolate. The fire had resounded in the halls: and the voice of the people is heard no more. The stream of Clutha was removed from its place, by the fall of the walls. --- The thistle shook, there, its lonely head: the moss whistled to the wind. The fox looked out, from the windows, the rank grass of the wall waved round his head.

\* The title of this poem, in the original, is *Duan na mlaoi*, i. e. *The poem of the Hymns*: probably on account of its many digressions from the subject, all which are in a lyric measure, as this song of Fingal. Fingal is celebrated by the Irish historians for his wisdom in making laws, his poetical genius, and his fore-knowledge of events. — O' Flaherty goes so far as to say, that Fingal's laws were extant in his own time.

† The reader may compare this passage with the three last verses of the 13th chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet foretels the destruction of Babylon.

head. --- Desolate is the dwelling of Moina, silence is in the house of her fathers. --- Raise the song of mourning, O bards, over the land of strangers. They have but fallen before us: for, one day, we must fall. --- Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy towers to-day; yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes; it howls in thy empty court, and whistles round thy half-worn shield. --- And let the blast of the desert come! we shall be renowned in our day. The mark of my arm shall be in the battle, and my name in the song of bards. --- Raise the song; send round the shell: and let joy be heard in my hall. --- When thou, sun of heaven, shalt fail! if thou shalt fail, thou mighty light! if thy brightness is for a season, like Fingal; our fame shall survive thy beams.

Such was the song of Fingal, in the day of his joy. His thousand bards leaned forward from their seats, to hear the voice of the king. It was like the music of the harp on the gale of the spring. --- Lovely were thy thoughts, O Fingal! why had not Ossian the strength of thy soul? --- But thou standest alone, my father; and who can equal the king of Morven?

The

The night passed away in song, and morning returned in joy; --- the mountains shewed their gray heads; and the blue face of ocean smiled. --- The white wave is seen tumbling round the distant rock; the gray mist rises, slowly, from the lake. It came, in the figure of an aged man, along the silent plain. Its large limbs did not move in steps; for a ghost supported it in mid air. It came towards Selma's hall, and dissolved in a shower of blood.

The king alone beheld the terrible sight, and he foresaw the death of the people. He came, in silence, to his hall; and took his father's spear. --- The mail rattled on his breast. The heroes rose around. They looked, in silence, on each other, marking the eyes of Fingal. --- They saw the battle in his face: the death of armies on his spear. --- A thousand shields, at once, are placed on their arms; and they drew a thousand swords. The hall of Selma brightened around. The clang of arms ascends. --- The gray dogs howl in their place. No word is among the mighty chiefs. --- Each marked the eyes of the king; and half assumed his spear.

Sons of Morven, begun the king, this is no time to fill the shell. The battle darkens near us; and  
death



death hovers over the land. Some ghost, the friend of Fingal, has forewarned us of the foe. — The sons of the stranger come from the darkly-rolling sea. For, from the water, came the sign of Morven's gloomy danger. --- Let each \* assume his heavy spear, and gird on his father's sword. --- Let the dark helmet rise on every head; and the mail pour its lightening from every side. --- The battle gathers like a tempest, and soon shall ye hear the roar of death.

The hero moved on before his host, like a cloud before a ridge of heaven's fire; when it pours on the  
sky

\* *Εὐ μὲν τις δορυ θηξασθω εὐ δ' ἀσπίδα θεοῖο.*

HOM. II. 382.

His sharpen'd spear let every Grecian wield,  
And every Grecian fix his brazen shield, &c.

POPE.

Let each

His adamantine coat gird well, and each  
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,  
Borne ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,  
If I conjecture right, no drizzling shower,  
But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.

MILTON,



sky of night , and mariners foresee a storm. On Cona's rising heath they stood : the white-bosomed maids beheld them above like a grove ; they foresaw the death of their youths , and looked towards the sea with fear. --- The white wave deceived them for distant sails , and the tear is on their cheek.

The sun rose on the sea , and we beheld a distant fleet. --- Like the mist of ocean they came : and poured their youth upon the coast. --- The chief was among them , like the stag in the midst of the herd. --- His shield is studded with gold , and stately strode the king of spears. --- He moved towards Selma ; his thousands moved behind.

Go , with thy song of peace , said Fingal ; go , Ullin , to the king of swords. Tell him that we are mighty in battle ; and that the ghosts of our foes are many. --- But renowned are they who have feasted in my halls ! they shew the arms \* of my fathers  
in

\* It was a custom among the ancient Scots , to exchange arms with their guests , and those arms were preserved long in the different families , as monuments of the friendship which subsisted between their ancestors.

in a foreign land: the sons of the strangers wonder,  
and bless the friends of Morven's race; for our names  
have been heard afar; the kings of the world shook  
in the midst of their people.

Ullin went with his song. Fingal rested on his  
spear: he saw the mighty foe in his armour: and  
he blest the stranger's son.

How stately art thou, son of the sea! said the  
king of woody Morven. Thy sword is a beam of  
might by thy side: thy spear is a fir that defies the  
storm. The varied face of the moon is not broader  
than thy shield. --- Ruddy is thy face of youth! soft  
the ringlets of thy hair! --- But this tree may fall;  
and his memory be forgot! --- The daughter of the  
stranger will be sad, and look to the rolling sea: ---  
the children will say, "We see a ship; perhaps it is  
the king " of Balclutha. " The tear starts from  
their mother's eye. Her thoughts are of him that  
sleeps in Morven.

Such were the words of the king, when Ullin came  
to the mighty Carthon: he threw down the spear  
before him; and raised the song of peace.

Come

Come to the feast of Fingal, Carthon, from  
the rolling sea ! partake the feast of the king, or lift  
the spear of war. The ghosts of our foes are many ;  
but renowned are the friends of Morven !

Behold that field, O Carthon ; many a green hill  
rises there, with mossy stones and rustling grass : these  
are the tombs of Fingal's foes, the sons of the rol-  
ling sea.

Dost thou speak to the feeble in arms, said Car-  
thon, bard of the woody Morven ? Is my face pale for  
fear, son of the peaceful song ? Why, then, dost  
thou think to darken my soul with the tales of those  
who fell ? --- My arm has fought in the battle ; my  
renown is known afar. Go to the feeble in arms, and  
bid them yield to Fingal. --- Have not I seen the fal-  
len Balclutha ? And shall I feast with Comhal's son ?  
Comhal ! who threw his fire in the midst of my fa-  
ther's hall ! I was young, and knew not the cause  
why the virgins wept. The columns of smoke pleased  
mine eye, when they rose above my walls ; I often  
looked back, with gladness, when my friends fled  
along the hill. — But when the years of my  
youth came on, I beheld the moss of my fallen walls ;

my

my sigh arose with the morning, and my tears descended with night. --- Shall I not fight, I said to my soul, against the children of my foes? And I will fight, O bard; I feel the strength of my soul.

His people gathered around the hero, and drew, at once, their shining swords. He stands, in the midst, like a pillar of fire; the tear halfstarting from his eye; for he thought of the fallen Balclutha, and the crowded pride of his soul arose. Sidelong he looked up to the hill, where our heroes shone in arms; the spear trembled in his hand: and, bending forward, he seemed to threaten the king.

Shall I, said Fingal to his soul, meet, at once, the king? Shall I stop him, in the midst of his course, before his fame shall arise? But the bard, hereafter, may say, when he sees the tomb of Carthon; Fingal took his thousands, along with him, to battle, before the noble Carthon fell. — No: --- bard of the times to come! thou shalt not lessen Fingal's fame. My heroes will fight the youth, and Fingal behold the battle. If he overcomes, I rush, in my strength, like the roaring stream of Cona.



Who, of my heroes, will meet the son of the rolling sea? Many are his warriors on the coast: and strong is his ashen spear!

Cathul \* rose, in his strength, the son of the mighty Lormar: three hundred youths attend the chief, the race \*\* of his native streams. Feeble was his arm against Carthon, he fell; and his heroes fled.

Connal † resumed the battle, but he broke his heavy spear: he lay bound on the field: and Carthon pursued his people.

Clefsámmor! said the king †† of Morven, where is the spear of thy strength? Wilt thou behold Connal

\* Cath-' huil, *the eye of battle.*

\*\* It appears, from this passage, that clanship was established, in the days of Fingal, though not on the same footing with the present tribes in the north of Scotland.

† This Connal is very much celebrated, in ancient poetry, for his wisdom and valour: there is a small tribe still subsisting, in the North, who pretend they are descended from him.

†† Fingal did not then know that Carthon was the son of Clefsámmor.



nal bound; thy friend, at the stream of Lora? Rise,  
in the light of thy steel, thou friend of Comhal. Let  
the youth of Balclutha feel the strength of Morven's  
race.

He rose in the strength of his steel, shaking his  
grizly locks. He fitted the shield to his side; and  
rushed, in the pride of valour.

Carthon stood, on that heathy rock, and saw  
the heroes approach. He loved the terrible joy of  
his face: and his strength, in the locks of age. —  
Shall I lift that spear, he said, that never strikes, but  
once, a foe? Or shall I, with the words of peace,  
preserve the warrior's life? Stately are his steps of  
age! --- lovely the remnant of his years. Perhaps it  
is the love of Moina; the father of car-borne Car-  
thon. Often have I heard, that he dwelt at the echo-  
ing stream of Lora.

Such were his words, when Clesammor came,  
and lifted high his spear. The youth received it on  
his shield, and spoke the words of peace. —  
Warrior of the aged locks! Is there no youth to lift  
the spear? Hast thou no son, to raise the shield be-  
fore his father, and to meet the arm of youth? Is  
the spouse of thy love no more? or weeps she over  
the

the tombs of thy sons? Art thou of the kings of men? What will be the fame of my sword if thou shalt fall?

It will be great, thou son of pride! begun the tall Clefsámmor, I have been renowned in battle; but I never told my name \* to a foe. Yield to me, son of the wave, and then thou shalt know, that the mark of my sword is in many a field.

I never yielded, king of spears! replied the noble pride of Carthon: I have also fought in battles; and I behold my future fame. Despise me not, thou chief of men; my arm, my spear is strong. Retire among thy friends, and let young heroes fight.

Why dost thou wound my soul, replied Clefsámmor with a tear? Age does not tremble on my hand; I still can lift the sword. Shall I fly in Fingal's

\* To tell one's name to an enemy was reckoned, in those days of heroism, a manifest evasion of fighting him; for, if it was once known, that friendship subsisted, of old, between the ancestors of the combatants, the battle immediately ceased; and the ancient amity of their forefathers was renewed. *A man who tells his name to his enemy, was of old an ignominious term for a coward.*

gal's sight; in the sight of him I loved? Son of the  
sea! I never fled: exalt thy pointed spear.

They fought, like two contending winds, that  
strive to roll the wave. Carthon bade his spear to  
err; for he still thought, that the foe was the spouse  
of Moina. — He broke Clefsámmor's beamy  
spear in twain: and seized his shining sword. But  
as Carthon was binding the chief; the chief drew  
the dagger of his fathers. He saw the foe's unco-  
vered side; and opened, there, a wound.

Fingal saw Clefsámmor low: he moved in the  
found of his steel. The host stood silent, in his pre-  
sence; they turned their eyes towards the hero. —  
He came, like the sudden noise of a storm, before  
the winds arise: the hunter hears it in the vale  
and retires to the cave of the rock.

Carthon stood in his place: the blood is rushing  
down his side: he saw the coming down of the king;  
and his hopes of fame arose \*; but pale was his  
cheek;

\* This expression admits of a double meaning, either  
that Carthon hoped to acquire glory by killing Fin-  
gal; or to be rendered famous by falling by his

cheek: his hair flew loose, his helmet shook on high: the force of Carthon failed; but his soul was strong.

Fingal beheld the heroes blood; he stopt the uplifted spear. Yield, king of swords! said Comhal's son; I behold thy blood. Thou hast been mighty in battle; and thy fame shall never fade.

Art thou the king so far renowned, replied the car-borne Carthon? Art thou that light of death, that frightens the kings of the world? --- But why should Carthon ask? for he is like the stream of his desert; strong as a river, in his course; swift as the eagle of the sky. --- O that I had fought the king; that my fame might be great in the song! that the hunter, beholding my tomb, might say, he fought with the mighty Fingal. But Carthon dies unknown; he has poured out his force on the feeble.

But thou shalt not die unknown, replied the king of woody Morven: my bards are many, O Carthon, and their songs descend to future times. The children of the years to come shall hear the fame of  
Car-

hand. The last is the most probable, as Carthon is already wounded.



Carthon ; when they sit round the burning oak \*, and the night is spent in the songs of old. The hunter, sitting in the heath, shall hear the rustling blast; and, raising his eyes, behold the rock where Carthon fell. He shall turn to his son, and shew the place where the mighty fought; "There the king of Balclutha fought, like the strength of a thousand streams."

Joy rose in Carthon's face: he lifted his heavy eyes. — He gave his sword to Fingal, to lie within his hall, that the memory of Balclutha's king might remain on Morven. — The battle ceased along the field, for the bard had sung the song of peace. The chiefs gathered round the falling Carthon, and heard his words, with sighs. Silent they leaned on their spears, while Balclutha's hero spoke. His hair sighed in the wind, and his words were feeble.

King

\* In the north of Scotland, till very lately, they burnt a large trunk of an oak at their festivals; it was called *the trunk of the feast*. Time had so much consecrated the custom, that the vulgar thought it a kind of sacrilege to disuse it.



King of Morven, Carthon said, I fall in the midst of my course. A foreign tomb receives, in youth, the last of Reuthámir's race. Darkness dwells in Balclutha: and the shadows of grief in Crathmo.--- But raise my remembrance on the banks of Lora: where my fathers dwelt. Perhaps the husband of Moina will mourn over his fallen Carthon.

His words reached the heart of Clefsámmor: he fell, in silence, on his son. The host stood darkened around: no voice is on the plains of Lora. Night came, and the moon, from the east, looked on the mournful field: but still they stood, like a silent grove that lifts its head on Gormal, when the loud winds are laid, and dark autumn is on the plain.

Three days they mourned over Carthon; on the fourth his father died. In the narrow plain of the rock they lie; and a dim ghost defends their tomb. There lovely Moina is often seen; when the sun-beam darts on the rock, and all around is dark. There she is seen, Malvina, but not like the daughters of the hill. Her robes are from the strangers land; and she is still alone.

Fingal

Fingal was sad for Carthon; he desired his bards to mark the day, when shadowy autumn returned. And often did they mark the day and sing the hero's praise. Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud? Death is trembling in his hand! his eyes are flames of fire! — Who roars along dark Lora's heath? Who but Carthon king of swords? The people fall! how he strides, like the fullen ghost of Morven! — But there he lies a goodly oak, which sudden blasts overturned! When shalt thou rise, Balclutha's joy! lovely car-borne Carthon? — Who comes so dark from ocean's roar, like autumn's shadowy cloud?

Such were the words of the bards, in the day of their mourning: I have accompanied their voice; and added to their song. My soul has been mournful for Carthon; he fell in the days of his valour: and thou, O Clessammor! where is thy dwelling in the air? — Has the youth forgot his wound? And flies he, on the clouds, with thee? — I feel the sun, O Malvina, leave me to my rest. Perhaps they may come to my dreams; I think I hear a feeble voice. — The beam of heaven delights to shine on the grave of Carthon: I feel it warm around.

F 5

O thou

O thou that rollest above \*, round as the shield of my fathers ! Whence are thy beams, O sun ! thy everlasting light ? Thou comest forth, in thy awful beauty, and the stars hide themselves in the sky ; the moon, cold and pale, sinks in the western wave. But thou thyself movest alone : who can be a companion of thy course ! The oaks of the mountains fall : the mountains themselves decay with years ; the ocean shrinks and grows again : the moon herself is lost in heaven ; but thou art for ever the same ; rejoicing in the brightness of thy course. When the world is dark with tempests ; when thunder rolls, and lightning flies ; thou lookest in thy beauty, from the clouds, and laughest at the storm. But to Ossian, thou lookest in vain ; for he beholds thy beams no more ; whether thy yellow hair flows on the eastern clouds,

or

\* This passage is something similar to Satan's address to the Sun in the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*.

O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd,  
Looks from thy sole dominion like the god  
Of this new world ; at whose sight all the stars  
Hide their diminish'd heads ; to thee I call,  
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name  
O Sun !

or thou tremblest at the gates of the west. But thou art perhaps, like me, for a season, and thy years will have an end, Thou shalt sleep in thy clouds, careless of the voice of the morning. — Exult then, O sun, 'in the strength of thy youth! Age is dark and unlovely; it is like the glimmering light of the moon, when it shines through broken clouds, and the mist is on the hills; the blast of the north is on the plain. the traveller shrinks in the midst of his journey.

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# DEATH OF CUCHULLIN:

## A P O E M \*.

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**I**s the wind on Fingal's shield? Or is the voice of past times in my hall? Sing on, sweet voice, for thou art pleasant, and carriest away my night with joy. Sing on, O Bragéla, daughter of car-borne Songlan!

It

\* Tradition throws considerable light on the history of Ireland, during the long reign of Fingal, the son of Comhal, in Morven. — Arth, the son of Cairbre, supreme king of Ireland, dying, was succeeded by his son Cormac, a minor. — The petty kings and chiefs of the tribes met at Temora, the royal palace, in order to chuse, out of their own number, a guardian to the young king. Disputes, concerning the choice of a proper person, run high, and it was resolved to end all differences by giving the tuition of the young king to Cuchullin, the son of Semo, who had rendered himself famous

by

THE DEATH OF CUCHULLIN: A POEM. 93

It is the white wave of the rock, and not Cuchullin's sails. Often do the mists deceive me for the ship

by his great actions, and who resided, at the time, with Connal, the son of Caithbat, in Ulster.

Cuchullin was but three and twenty years old, when he assumed the management of affairs in Ireland: and the invasion of Swaran happened two years after. In the twenty-seventh year of Cuchullin's age, and the third of his administration, Torlath, the son of Cantéla, one of the chiefs of that colony of Belgæ, who were in possession of the south of Ireland, set up for himself in Connaught, and advanced towards Temora, in order to dethrone Cormac, who, excepting Feradath, afterwards king of Ireland, was the only one of the Scotch race of kings existing in that country. Cuchullin marched against him, came up with him at the lake of Lego, and totally defeated his forces. Torlath fell in the battle by Cuchullin's hand; but as he himself pressed too eagerly on the flying enemy, he was mortally wounded by an arrow, and died the second day after.

The good fortune of Cormac fell with Cuchullin; many set up for themselves, and anarchy and confusion

## 94 THE DEATH OF CUCHULLIN:

Ship of my love! when they rise round some ghost,  
and spread their gray skirts on the wind. Why dost  
thou

fusion reigned. At last Cormac was taken off; and Cairbar, lord of Atha, one of the competitors for the throne, having defeated all his rivals, became sole monarch of Ireland. — The family of Fingal, who were in the interest of Cormac's family, were resolved to deprive Cairbar of the throne he had usurped; in particular, Oscar the son of Ossian had determined to revenge the death of Cathol, his friend, who had been assassinated by Cairbar. — The threats of Oscar reached Cairbar's ears: he invited him in a friendly manner to a feast which he had prepared at the royal palace of Temora, resolving to pick a quarrel, and have some pretext for killing him.

The quarrel happened; the followers of both fought, and Cairbar and Oscar fell by mutual wounds: in the mean time Fingal arrived from Scotland with an army, defeated the friends of Cairbar, and re-established the family of Cormac in the possession of the kingdom. — — The present poem concerns the death of Cuchullin. It is, in the original, called *Duan loch Leigo*, i. e. *The*

Poem

thou delay thy coming, son of the generous Semo? —  
 Four times has autumn returned with its winds, and  
 raised the seas of Togorma \*, since thou hast been in  
 the

*Poem of Lego's Lake*, and is an episode introduced in a great poem, which celebrated the last expedition of Fingal into Ireland. The greatest part of the poem is lost, and nothing remains but some episodes, which a few old people in the north of Scotland retain on memory. — Cuchullin is the most famous champion in the Irish traditions and poems; in them he is always called the *redoubtable Cuchullin*; and the fables concerning his strength and valour are innumerable. Ossian thought his expedition against the Fir-bolg, or Belgæ of Britain, a subject fit for an epic poem; which was extant till of late, and was called *Yora-na-tana*, or a *Dispute about Possessions*, as the war which was the foundation of it, was commenced by the British Belgæ, who inhabited Ireland, in order to extend their territories. — The fragments that remain of this poem are animated with the genuine spirit of Ossian; so that there can be no doubt that it was of his composition.

\* Togorma, i. e. *The Island of blone waves*, one of  
 the



## 96 THE DEATH OF CUCHULLIN:

the roar of battles, and Bragéla distant far. --- Hills of the Isle of mist! when will ye answer to his hounds? — But ye are dark in your clouds, and sad Bragéla calls in vain. Night comes rolling down: the face of ocean fails. The heathcock's head is beneath his wing: the hind sleeps with the hart of the desert. They shall rise with the morning's light, and feed on the mossy stream. But my tears return with the sun, my sighs come on with the night. When wilt thou come in thine arms, O chief of mossy Tura?

Pleasant is thy voice in Ossian's ear, daughter of ear-borne Sorglan! But retire to the hall of shells: to the beam of the burning oak. — Attend to the beam of the sea: it rolls at Dunscath's walls: let sleep descend on thy blue eyes, and the hero come to thy dreams.

Cuchullin

the Hebrides, was subject to Connal, the son of Caithbat, Cucullin's friend. — He is sometimes called the son of Colgar, from one of that name who was the founder of the family. — Connal, a few days before the news of Torlath's revolt came to Temora, had failed to Togorma, his native isle; where he was detained by contrary winds during the war in which Cuchullin was killed.

Cuchullin sits at Lego's lake, at the dark rolling  
 of waters. Night is around the hero; and his thou-  
 sands spread on the heath: a hundred oaks burn in the  
 midst, the feast of shells is smoaking wide. --- Carril  
 strikes the harp, beneath a tree; his gray locks glit-  
 ter in the beam; the rustling blast of night is near,  
 and lifts his aged hair. --- His song is of the blue  
 Togorma, and of its chief, Cuchullin's friend.

Why art thou absent, Connal, in the day of the  
 gloomy storm? The chiefs of the south have conve-  
 ned against the car-borne Cormac: the winds detain  
 thy sails, and thy blue waters roll around thee. But  
 Cormac is not alone: the son of Semo fights his bat-  
 tles. Semo's son his battles fights! the terror of the  
 stranger! he that is like the vapour of death \*. Flow-  
 ly

\* Οἷν δ' ἐκ νεφέων ἐρεθιστὴ φαίνεται αἶθρ  
 Καύματος ἐξ ἀνέμοιο δυσάεος ἔρρυμενοιο.

Hom. II. 5.

As vapours blown by Auster's sultry breath,  
 Pregnant with plagues, and shedding seeds of death,  
 Beneath the rage of burning Sirius rise,  
 Choke the parch'd earth, and blacken all the skies,

P O E M.

98 THE DEATH OF CUCHULLIN:

ly borne by sultry winds. The sun reddens in its presence, the people fall around.

Such was the song of Carril, when a son of the foe appeared; he threw down his pointless spear, and spoke the words of Torlath, Torlath the chief of heroes, from Lego's fable surge: he that led his thousands to battle, against car-borne Cormac, Cormac, who was distant far, in Temora's \* echoing halls: he learned to bend the bow of his fathers; and to lift the spear. Nor long didst thou lift the spear, mildly-shining beam of youth! death stands dim behind thee, like the darkened half of the moon behind its growing light.

Cuchullin rose before the bard †, that came from generous Torlath; he offered him the shell of joy,

\* The royal palace of the Irish kings; Teamhrath according to some of the bards.

† The bards were the heralds of ancient times; and their persons were sacred on account of their office. In later times they abused that privilege; and as their persons were inviolable, they satyrised and lampooned so freely those who were not liked by their patrons, that they became a public nuisance.

joy, and honoured the son of songs. Sweet voice of Lego! he said, what are the words of Torlath? Comes he to our feast or battle, the car-borne son of Cantéla \*?

He comes to thy battle, replied the bard, to the founding strife of spears. — When morning is gray on Lego, Torlath will fight on the plain: and wilt thou meet him, in thine arms, king of the Isle of mist? Terrible is the spear of Torlath! it is a meteor of night. He lifts it, and the people fall: death fits in the lightning of his sword.

Do I fear, replied Cuchullin, the spear of car-borne Torlath? He is brave as a thousand heroes; but my soul delights in war. The sword rests not by the side of Cuchullin, bard of the times of old! Morning shall meet me on the plain, and gleam on the blue arms of Semo's son. — But sit thou, on the heath, O bard! and let us hear thy voice: partake of the joyful shell; and hear the songs of Temora.

This

Screened under the character of heralds, they grossly abused the enemy when he would not accept the terms they offered.

\* *Cean-teola'*, head of a family.



100 THE DEATH OF CUCHULLIN:

This is no time, replied the bard, to hear the song of joy; when the mighty are to meet in battle like the strength of the waves of Lego. Why art thou so dark, Slimora \*! with all thy silent woods? No green star trembles on thy top; no moon-beam on thy side. But the meteors of death are there, and the gray watry forms of ghosts. Why art thou dark, Slimora! with thy silent woods?

He retired, in the sound of his song; Carril accompanied his voice. The music was like the memory of joys that are past, pleasant and mournful to the soul. The ghosts of departed bards heard it from Slimora's side. Soft sound is spread along the wood, and the silent valleys of night rejoice. — So, when he sits in the silence of noon, in the valley of his breeze, the humming of the mountain bee comes to Ossian's ear: the gale drowns it often in its course; but the pleasant sound returns again.

Raise, said Cuchullin, to his hundred bards the song of the noble Fingal: that song which he hears at night, when the dreams of his rest descend: when the bards strike the distant harp, and the faint light gleams on Selma's walls. Or let the grief of Lara rise,

\* *Slia'-mór, great hill.*

rise, and the sighs of the mother of Calmar \*, when he was fought, in vain, on his hills; and she beheld his bow in the hall — Carril, place the shield of Caithbat on that branch; and let the spear of Cuchullin be near; that the sound of my battle may rise with the gray beam of the east.

The hero leaned on his father's shield: the song of Lora rose. The hundred bards were distant far: Carril alone is near the chief. The words of the song were his; and the sound of his harp was mournful.

Alcletha † with the aged locks! mother of car-borne Calmar! why dost thou look towards the desert,

\* Calmar the son of Matha. His death is related at large, in the third book of Fingal. He was the only son of Matha; and the family was extinct in him. — The seat of the family was on the banks of the river Lara, in the neighbourhood of Lego, and probably near the place where Cuchullin lay; which circumstance suggested to him, the lamentation of Alclétha over her son.

† Ald-cla'tha, *decaying beauty*: probably a poetical name given the mother of Colmar, by the bard himself.

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far, to behold the return of thy son? These are no,  
his heroes, dark on the heath: noir is that the voice  
of Calmar: it is but the distant grove, Alclétha!  
but the roar of the mountain wind!

Who \* bounds over Lara's stream, sister of the  
noble Calmar? Does not Alclétha behold his spear?  
But her eyes are dim! Is it not the son of Matha,  
daughter of my love?

It is but an aged oak, Alclétha! replied the lovely  
weeping Alona †; it is but an oak, Alclétha,  
bent over Lara's stream. But who comes along the  
plain? sorrow is in his speed. He lifts high the  
spear of Calmar. Alclétha, it is covered with blood!

But it is covered with the blood of foes \*\*, sister  
of car-borne Calmar! his spear never returned unstained

\* Alcletha speaks. Calmar had promised to return,  
by a certain day, and his mother and his sister Alona  
are represented by the bard and looking, with  
impatience, towards that quarter where they expected  
Calmar would make his first appearance.

† Alúine, *exquisitely beautiful*.

\*\* Alclétha speaks.

ned with blood \*, nor his bow from the strife of the mighty. The battle is consumed in his presence : he is a flame of death, Alona! —— Youth † of the mournful speed ! where is the son of Alclértha ? Does he return with his fame ? in the midst of his echoing shields ? —— Thou art dark and silent ! --- Calmar is then no more. Tell me not, warrior, how he fell, for I cannot hear of his wound. ——

Why dost thou look towards the desert, mother of car-borne Calmar ? ——

Such was the song of Carril, when Cuchullin lay on his shield : the bards rested on their harps, and sleep fell softly around. —— The son of Semo was awake alone ; his soul was fixed on the war. —— The burning oaks began to decay ; faint red light is spread

\* From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan returned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. 2 Sam. i. 22.

† She addresses herself to Larnir, Calmar's friend, who had returned with the news of his death.



# 104 THE DEATH OF CUCHULLIN:

spread around. --- A feeble voice is heard: the ghost of Calmar came. He stalked in the beam. Dark is the wound in his side. His hair is disordered and loose. Joy sits darkly on his face: and he seems to invite Cuchullin to his cave.

Son of the cloudy night! said the rising chief of Erin; Why dost thou bend thy dark eyes on me, ghost of the car-borne Calmar? Wouldest thou frighten me, O Matha's son! from the battles of Cormac? Thy hand was not feeble in war; neither was thy voice\* for peace. How art thou changed, chief of Lara! if thou now dost advise to fly! — But, Calmar, I never fled. I never feared † the ghosts of the desert. Small is their knowledge, and weak their hands; their dwelling is in the wind. — But my soul grows in danger, and rejoices in the noise of steel. Retire thou to thy cave; thou art not Calmar's ghost; he delighted in battle, and his arm was like the thunder of heaven.

He retired in his blast with joy, for he had heard the voice of his praise. The faint beam of the morning

\* See Calmar's speech, in the first book of Fingal.

† See Cuchullin's reply to Connal, concerning Cruag's ghost. Fing. b. 2.

ning rose, and the sound of Caithbat's buckler spread.  
Green Ullin's warriors convened, like the roar of many  
streams. --- The horn of war is heard over Lego:  
the mighty Torlath came.

Why dost thou come with thy thousands, Cuchullin, said the chief of Lego. I know the strength  
of thy arm, and thy soul is an unextinguished fire. ---  
Why fight we not on the plain, and let our hosts be-  
hold our deeds? Let them behold us like roaring wa-  
ves, that tumble round a rock: the mariners hasten  
away, and look on their strife with fear.

Thou risest, like the sun, on my soul, replied  
the son of Semo. Thine arm is mighty, O Tor-  
lath! and worthy of my wrath. Retire, ye men of  
Ullin, to Slimora's shady side; behold the chief of  
Erin, in the day of his fame. --- Carril! tell  
to mighty Connal, if Cuchullin must fall, tell him I  
accused the winds which roar on Togorma's waves. ---  
Never was he absent in battle, when the strife of my  
fame arose. --- Let this sword be before Cormac, like  
the beam of heaven: let his counsel sound in Temora  
in the day of danger.

# 106 THE DEATH OF CUCHULLIN:

He rushed, in the sound of his arms, like the terrible spirit of Loda \*, when he comes in the roar of a thousand storms, and scatters battles from his eyes. --- He sits on a cloud over Lochlin's seas : his mighty hand is on his sword, and the winds lift his flaming locks. --- So terrible was Cuchullin in the day of his fame. --- Torlath fell by his hand, and Ilego's heroes mourned. --- They gather around the chief like the clouds of the desert. --- A thousand swords rose at once ; a thousand arrows flew ; but he stood like a rock in the midst of a roaring sea. ———

They

\* Loda, in the third book of Fingal, is mentioned as a place of worship in Scandinavia : by the *spirit of Loda*, the poet probably means Odin, the great deity of the northern nations. He is described here with all his terrors about him, not unlike Mars, as he is introduced in a simile, in the seventh Iliad.

——— οὓς τε πελώριος ἔρχεται Ἄρης  
Ὅς τ' εἰσὶν πόλεμόνδε μετ' ἀνέρας, αὔτε κρονίων  
Θυμοβόρῃ ἐριδῶ μὲνι ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι.

So stalks in arms the grisly god of Thrace,  
When Jove to punish faithless men prepares,  
And gives whole nations to the waste of wars.

POPE.

They fell around; he strode in blood : dark Slimora  
echoed wide. --- The sons of Ullin came, and the  
battle spread over Lego. --- The chief of Erin over-  
came; he returned over the field with his fame. ———

But pale he returned ! The joy of his face was  
dark. He rolled his eyes in silence. --- The sword  
hung, unsheathed, in his hand, and his spear  
bent at every step.

Carril, said the king in secret, the strength of  
Cuchullin fails. My days are with the years that are  
past : and no morning of mine shall arise. --- They  
shall seek me at Temora, but I shall not be found.  
Cormac will weep in his hall, and say, " Where is  
Tura's chief ? " --- But my name is renowned ! my  
fame in the song of bards. ——— The youth will  
say in secret, O let me die as Cuchullin died ; renown  
cloathed him like a robe ; and the light of his fame is  
great. Draw the arrow from my side ; and lay Cu-  
chullin beneath that oak. Place the shield of Caith-  
bat near, that they may behold me amidst the  
arms of my fathers. ---

And



# 108 THE DEATH OF CUCHULLIN:

And is the son of Semo fallen \*, said Carril with  
a sigh? — Mournful are Tura's walls; and for-  
row dwells at Duncaich. --- Thy spouse is left alone  
in her youth, the son † of thy love is alone. --- He  
shall come to Bragela, and ask her why she weeps. ---  
He shall lift his eyes to the wall, and see his father's  
sword. --- Whose sword is that? he will say: and  
the soul of his mother is sad. Who is that, like the  
hare

\* The Irish historians have placed Cuchullin in the  
first century. — The translator has given his  
reasons for fixing him in the third, in the disserta-  
tion which is prefixed to this collection. In other  
particulars the accounts of Keating and O'Flaherty  
coincide pretty nearly with Ossian's poems, and  
the traditions of the Highlands and Isles. They  
say that he was killed in the twenty-seventh year  
of his age, and they give him a great character  
for his wisdom and valour.

† Conloch, who was afterwards very famous for his  
great exploits in Ireland. He was so remarkable  
for his dexterity in handling the javelin, that when  
a good marksman is described, it has passed into  
a proverb, in the north of Scotland, *He is un-  
erring as the arm of Conloch.*

hart of the desert, in the murmur of his course? ---  
 His eyes look wildiy round in search of his friend. —  
 Connal, son of Colgar, where hast thou been, when  
 the mighty fell? Did the seas of Togorma roll round  
 thee? Was the wind of the south in thy sails? The  
 mighty have fallen in battle, and thou wast not there. ---  
 Let none tell it in Selma, nor in Morven's  
 woody land; Fingal will be sad, and the sons of  
 the desert mourn.

By the dark rolling waves of Lego they raised the  
 hero's tomb. — Luäth \*, at a distance, lies,  
 the companion of Cuchullin, at the chace. —  
 Blest † be thy soul, son of Semo; thou wert mighty  
 in

\* It was of old, the custom to bury the favourite dog  
 near the master. This was not peculiar to the an-  
 cient Scots, for we find it practised by many other  
 nations in their ages of heroism. — There is  
 a stone shewn still at Dunscaich in the Isle of Sky,  
 to which Cuchullin commonly bound his dog  
 Luäth. — The stone goes by his name to this  
 day.

† This is the song of the bards over Cuchullin's tomb,  
 Every stanza closes with some remarkable title of  
 the

## 110 THE DEATH OF CUCHLLIN:

in battle, --- Thy strength was like the strength of a stream: thy speed like the eagle's \* wing. --- Thy path in the battle was terrible: the steps of death were behind thy sword. --- Blest be thy soul, son of Semo; carborne chief of Dunscath!

Thou hast not fallen by the sword of the mighty, neither was thy blood on the spear of the valiant. --- The arrow came, like the sting of death in a blast: nor did the feeble hand, which drew the bow, perceive it. Peace to thy soul, in thy cave, chief of the isle of Mist!

The mighty are dispersed at Temora: there is none in Cormac's hall. The king mourns in his youth, for he does not behold thy coming. The sound of thy shield is ceased: his foes are gathering round. Soft be thy rest in thy cave, chief of Erin's wars!

Bragela

the hero, which was always the custom in funeral elegies. --- The verse of the song is a lyric measure, and it was of old sung to the harp.

\* They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. 2 Sam. i. 23.

## A P O E M.

## III

Bragela will not hope thy return, or see thy  
sails in ocean's foam. — Her steps are not on  
the shore: nor her ear open to the voice of thy  
rowers. --- She sits in the hall of shells, and sees  
the arms of him that is no more. --- Thine eyes  
are full of tears, daughter of ear-borne Sorglan!  
—— Blest be thy soul in death, O chief of  
shady Cromla!

---

DAR.



# DAR - THULA :

## A P O E M \*.

---

**D**aughter of heaven †, fair art thou ! the silence  
of thy face is pleasant. Thou comest forth  
in loveliness : the stars attend thy blue steps in the  
east.

\* It may not be improper here, to give the story  
which is the foundation of this poem, as it is handed  
down by tradition. — Uínoth, lord of Etha,  
which is probably that part of Argyleshire which  
is near Loch Eta, an arm of the sea in Lorn, had  
three sons, Nathos, Althos, and Ardan by Sliffa-  
ma, the daughter of Semo and sister to the celebra-  
ted Cuchullin. The three brothers, when very  
young, were sent over to Ireland, by their father,  
to learn the use of arms, under their uncle Cuchul-  
lin, who made a great figure in that kingdom. They  
were just landed in Ulster when the news of Cu-  
chullin's death arrived. Nathos, though very yo-  
ung, took the command of Cuchullin's army, ma-  
de head against Cairbar the usurper, and defeated  
him

DAR-THULA: A POEM. 113

22ft. The clouds rejoice in thy presence, O moon,  
and brighten their darkbrown sides. Who is like thee  
in

him in several battles. Cairbar at last having found means to murder Cormac the lawful king, the army of Nathos shifted sides, and he himself was obliged to return into Ulster, in order to pass over into Scotland.

Dar-thula, the daughter of Colla, with whom Cairbar was in love, resided, on that time, in Selkama a castle in Ulster: she saw, fell in love, and fled with Nathos; but a storm rising at sea, they were unfortunately driven back on that part of the coast of Ulster, where Cairbar was encamped with his army, waiting for Fingal, who meditated an expedition into Ireland, to re-establish the Scotch race of kings on the throne of that kingdom. The three brothers, after having defended themselves, for some time, with great bravery, were overpowered and slain, and the unfortunate Dar-thula killed herself upon the body of her beloved Nathos.

Osian opens the poem, on the night preceding the death of the sons of Usnoth, and brings in, by way of episode, what passed before. He relates the death of Dar-thula differently from the com-

H

mon

in heaven, daughter of the night? The stars are ashamed in thy presence, and turn aside their green, sparkling eyes. --- Whither dost thou retire from thy course, when the darkness \* of thy countenance grows? Hast thou thy hall like Ossian? Dwellest thou in the shadow of grief? Have thy sisters fallen from heaven? Are they who rejoiced with thee, at night, no more? --- Yes! --- they have fallen, fair light! and thou dost often retire to mourn. — But thou thyself shalt fail, one night; and leave thy blue path in heaven. The stars will then lift their green heads: they who were ashamed in thy presence, will rejoice.

Thou art now clothed with thy brightness: look from thy gates in the sky. Burst the cloud, O wind, that the daughter of night may look forth, that the shaggy mountains may brighten, and the ocean roll its blue waves in light. Nathos

mon tradition; his account is the most probable, as suicide seem to have been unknown in those early times: for no traces of it are found in the old poetry.

† The address to the moon is very beautiful in the original. It is in a lyric measure, and appears to have been sung to the harp.

• The poet means the moon in her wane.

Nathos \* is on the deep, and Althos that beam  
 of youth, Ardan is near his brothers; they move in  
 the gloom of their course. The sons of Ufnoth move  
 in darkness from the wrath of car-borne Cairbar †.

Who is that dim, by their side? the night has  
 covered her beauty. Her hair sighs on ocean's wind;  
 her robe streams in dusky wreaths. She is like the  
 fair spirit of heaven, in the midst of his shadowy mist.  
 Who is it but Dar-thula ††, the first of Erin's maids?  
 She has fled from the love of Cairbar, with the car-  
 borne Nathos. But the winds deceive thee, O Dar-  
 thula;

\* Nathos signifies *youthful*, Ailthos, *exquisite beauty*,  
 Ardan, *pride*.

† Cairbar, who murdered Cormac king of Ireland,  
 and usurped the throne. He was afterwards kil-  
 led by Oscar the son of Ossian in a single combat.  
 The poet, upon other occasions, gives him the  
 epithet of red-haired.

†† Dar-thula, or Dart-'huile, *a woman with fine eyes*.  
 She was the most famous beauty of antiquity. To  
 this day, when a woman is praised for her beauty,  
 the common phrase is, that *she is as lovely as Dar-  
 thula*.



thula; and deny the woody Etha to thy sails. These are not thy mountains, Nathos, nor is that the roar of thy climbing waves. The halls of Cairbar are near; and the towers of the foe lift their heads. Ullin stretches its green head into the sea; and Tura's bay receives the ship. Where have ye been, ye southern winds! when the sons of my love were deceived? But ye have been sporting on plains, and pursuing the thistle's beard. O that ye had been rustling in the sails of Nathos, till the hills of Etha rose! till they rose in their clouds, and saw their coming chief! Long hast thou been absent, Nathos! and the day of thy return is past \*.

But the land of strangers saw thee, lovely: thou wast lovely in the eyes of Dar-thula. Thy face was like the light of the morning, thy hair like the raven's wing. Thy soul was generous and mild, like the hour of the setting sun. Thy words were the gale of the reeds, or the gliding stream of Lora.

But

- \* That is, the day appointed by destiny. We find no deity in Ossian's poetry, if fate is not one; of that he is very full in some of his poems in the translator's hands,

But when the rage of battle rose, thou wast like  
a sea in a storm; the clang of arms was terrible : the  
host vanished at the sound of thy course. — It  
was then Dar-thula beheld thee, from the top of her  
mossy tower : from the tower of Seláma \*, where her  
fathers dwelt.

Lovely art thou, O stranger! she said, for her  
trembling soul arose. Fair art thou in thy battles,  
friend of the fallen Cormac! † Why dost thou rush  
on, in thy valour, youth of the ruddy look? Few  
are thy hands, in battle, against the car-borne  
Cair-

\* The poet does not mean that Seláma which is men-  
tioned as the seat of Toscar in Ulster, in the poem  
of Conlath and Cuthana. The word in the original  
signifies either *beautiful to behold*, or a place *with a  
pleasant or wide prospect*. In those times, they built  
their houses upon eminences, to command a view  
of the country, and to prevent their being surpris-  
ed: many of them, on that account, were called  
Seláma. The famous Selma of Fingal is derived  
from the same root.

† Cormac the young king of Ireland, who was mur-  
dered by Cairbar.

Cairbar -- O that I might be freed of his love ! \*  
 that I might rejoice in the presence of Nathos ! ———  
 Blest are the rocks of Etha ; they will behold his steps  
 at the chace ! they will see his white bosom , when  
 the winds lift his raven hair !

Such were thy words , Dar-thula , in Seláma's  
 mossy towers. But, now, the night is round thee ;  
 and the winds have deceived thy sails. The winds  
 have deceived thy sails, Dar-thula ; their blustering  
 sound is high. Cease a little while, O north wind,  
 and let me hear the voice of the lovely. Thy voice  
 is lovely, Dar-thula, between the rustling blasts.

Are these the rocks of Nathos, on the roar of his  
 mountain-streams ? Comes that beam of light from  
 Ufnoth's nightly hall ? The mist rolls around, and the  
 beam is feeble : but the light of Dar-thula's soul is  
 the car-borne chief of Etha ! Son of the generous  
 Ufnoth, why that broken sigh ? Are we not in the  
 land of strangers, chief of echoing Etha ?

These are not the rocks of Nathos, he replied,  
 nor the roar of his streams. No light comes from  
 Etha's halls, for they are distant far. We are in the  
 land

\* That is, of the love of Cairbar.

land of strangers, in the land of car-borne Cairbar.  
The winds have deceived us, Dar-thula. Ullin lifts  
here her green hills. --- Go towards the north, Al-  
thos; be thy steps, Ardan, along the coast; that the  
foe may not come in darkness, and our hopes of  
Etha fail. —

I will go towards that mossy tower, and see who  
dwells about the beam. --- Rest, Dar-thula, on the  
shore! rest in peace, thou beam of light! the sword  
of Nathos is around thee, like the lightning of  
heaven.

He went. She sat alone, and heard the rolling  
of the wave. Thé big tear is in her eye; and she  
looks for the car-borne Nathos. --- Her soul tremb-  
les at the blast. And she turns her ear towards the  
tread of his feet. — The tread of his feet is not  
heard. Where art thou, son of my love! The roar  
of the blast is around me. Dark is the cloudy night.  
— But Nathos does not return. What detains  
thee, chief of Etha? --- Have the foes met the hero  
in the strife of the night? ---

He returned, but his face was dark: he had seen  
his departed friend. --- It was the wall of Tura, and



the ghost of Cuchullin stalked there. The sighing of his breast was frequent ; and the decayed flame of his eyes terrible. His spear was a column of mist : the stars looked dim through his form. His voice was like hollow wind in a cave : and he told the tale of grief. The soul of Nathos was sad, like the sun \* in the day of mist, when his face is watry and dim.

Why art thou sad, O Nathos, said the lovely daughter of Colla? Thou art a pillar of light to Darthula : the joy of her eyes is in Etha's chief. Where is my friend †, but Nathos? My father rests in the tomb. Silence dwells on Seláma : sadness spreads on the blue streams of my land. My friends have fallen, with

\* *Conditus in nubem, medioque refugerit orbe;*

VIRG.

— Thro' mists he shoots his fullen beams,  
Frugal of light, in loose and straggling streams.

DRYDEN.

† ———— οὐ γὰρ ἐτ' ἀλλῃ

ἔσαι θαλπωρή, ————

————— ἐδέ μοι ἐστὶ πατὴρ καὶ πότνια  
μήτηρ.

HOM. vi. 411.

with Cormac. The mighty were slain in the battle of Ullin.

Evening darkened on the plain. The blue streams failed before mine eyes. The unfrequent blast came rustling in the tops of Seláma's groves. My feat was beneath a tree on the walls of my fathers. Truthil past before my soul; the brother of my love; he that was absent \* in battle against the car-borne Cairbar.

Bending on his spear, the gray-haired Colla came: his downcast face is dark, and sorrow dwells in his soul. His sword is on the side of the hero: the helmet of his fathers on his head. --- The battle grows in his breast. He strives to hide the tear.

Dar-thula, he fighting said, thou art the last of Colla's race. Truthil is fallen in battle. The king † of Seláma is no more. — Cairbar comes, with his thousands, towards Seláma's walls. --- Colla will meet

\* The family of Colla preserved their loyalty to Cormac long after the death of Cucnullin.

† It is very common, in Ossian's poetry, to give the title of King to every chief that was remarkable for his valour.

meet his pride, and revenge his son. But where shall I find thy safety, Dar-thula with the dark-brown hair ! thou art lovely as the sun-beam of heaven, and thy friends are low !

And is the son of battle fallen ? I said with a bursting sigh. Ceased the generous soul of Truthil to lighten through the field ? --- My safety, Colla, is in that bow ; I have learned to pierce the deer. Is not Cairbar like the hart of the desert, father of fallen Truthil ?

The face of age brightened with joy : and the crouded tears of his eyes poured down. The lips of Colla trembled. His gray beard whistled in the blast. Thou art the sister of Truthil, he said, and thou burnest in the fire of his soul. Take, Dar-thula, take that spear, that brazen shield, that burnished helmet : they are the spoils of a warrior : a son \* of early youth. — When the light rises on Seláma, we  
go

\* The poet, to make the story of Dar-thula's arming herself for battle, more probable, makes her armour to be that of a very young man, otherwise it would shock all belief, that she, who was very young, should be able to carry it.

go to meet the car-borne Cairbar. — But keep  
thou near the arm of Colla; beneath the shadow of  
my shield. Thy father, Dar-thula, could once de-  
fend thee; but age is trembling on his haad. —  
The strength of his arm has failed, and his soul  
is darkened with grief.

We passed the night in sorrow. The light of  
morning rose. I shone in the arms of battle. The  
gray-haired hero moved before. The sons of Selá-  
ma convened around the founding shield of Colla. But  
few were they in the plain, and their locks were gray.  
The youths had fallen with Truthil, in the battle of  
car-borne Cormac.

Companions of my youth! said Colla, it was not  
thus you have seen me in arms. It was not thus I  
strode to battle, when the great Confadan fell. But  
ye are laden with grief. The darkness of age  
comes like the mist of the desert. My shield is  
worn with years; my sword is fixed \* in its place.

I said

\* It was the custom of those times, that every war-  
rior at a certain age, or when he became unfit for  
the field, fixed his arms, in the great hall, where

the



I said to my soul, thy evening shall be calm, and thy departure like a fading light. But the storm has returned; I bend like an aged oak. My boughs are fallen on Selâma; and I tremble in my place. — Where art thou, with thy fallen heroes, O my car-borne Truthil! Thou answerest not from thy rushing blast; and the soul of thy father is sad. But I will be sad no more, Cairbar or Colla must fall. I feel the returning strength of my arm. My heart leaps at the sound of battle.

The hero drew his sword. The gleaming blades of his people rose. They moved along the plain. Their gray hair streamed in the wind. --- Cairbar sat, at the feast, in the silent plain of Lona\*. He saw the coming of the heroes, and he called his chiefs to battle.

Why

the tribe feasted, upon joyful occasions. He was afterwards never to appear in battle; and this stage of life was called the *time of fixing of the arms*.

\* Lona, a marshy plain. It was the custom, in the days of Ossian, to feast after a victory. Cairbar had just provided an entertainment for his army, upon the defeat of Truthil the son of Colla, and the

Why † should I tell to Nathos, how the strife  
 of battle grew ! I have seen thee, in the midst of  
 thousands, like the beam of heaven's fire ; it is beau-  
 tiful, but terrible ; the people fall in its red course. —  
 The spear of Colla flew, for he remembered the  
 battles of his youth. An arrow came with its sound,  
 and pierced the hero's side. He fell on his echoing  
 shield. My soul started with fear ; I stretched my  
 buckler over him ; but my heaving breast was seen.  
 Cairbar came, with his spear, and he beheld Selâma's  
 maid : joy rose on his dark-brown face ; he stayed  
 the lifted steel. He raised the tomb of Colla ; and  
 brought me weeping to Selâma. He spoke the  
 words of love, but my soul was sad. I saw the shields  
 of

the rest of the party of Cormac, when Colla and  
 his aged warriors arrived to give him battle.

† The poet avoids the description of the battle of Lo-  
 na, as it would be improper in the mouth of a wo-  
 man, and could have nothing new, after the nu-  
 merous descriptions, of that kind, in his other  
 poems. He, at the same time, gives an opportu-  
 nity to Dar-thula to pass a fine compliment on her  
 lover.

of my fathers, and the sword of car-borne Truth. I saw the arms of the dead, and the tear was on my cheek.

Then thou didst come, O Nathos: and gloomy Cairbar fled. He fled like the ghost of the desert before the morning's beam. His hosts were not near: and feeble was his arm against thy steel.

Why \* art thou sad, O Nathos? said the lovely maid of Colla.

I have met, replied the hero, the battle in my youth. My arm could not lift the spear, when first the danger rose; but my soul brightened before the war, as the green narrow vale, when the sun pours his streamy beams, before he hides his head in a storm. My soul brightened in danger before I saw Seláma's fair; before I saw thee, like a star, that shines on the hill, at night; the cloud slowly comes, and threatens the lovely light.

We

\* It is usual with Ossian, to repeat, at the end of the episodes, the sentence which introduced them. It brings back the mind of the reader to the main story of the poem.

We are in the land of the foe, and the winds have deceived us, Dar-thula! the strength of our friends is not near, nor the mountains of Etha. Where shall I find thy peace, daughter of mighty Colla! The brothers of Nathos are brave: and his own sword has shone in war. But what are the sons of Ufnoth to the host of car-borne Cairbar! O that the winds had brought thy sails, Oscar \* king of men! thou didst promise to come to the battles of fallen Cormac. Then would my hand be strong as the flaming arm of death. Cairbar would tremble in his halls, and peace dwell round the lovely Dar-thula. But why dost thou fall, my soul? The sons of Ufnoth may prevail.

And they will prevail, O Nathos, said the rising soul of the maid: never shall Dar-thula behold the halls of gloomy Cairbar. Give me those arms of brass, that glitter to that passing meteor; I see them in the dark-bosomed ship. Dar-thula will enter the  
battle

\* Oscar, the son of Ossian, had long resolved on the expedition, into Ireland, against Cairbar, who had assassinated his friend Cathol, the son of Moran, an Irishman of noble extraction, and in the interest of the family of Cormac.



battle of steel. --- Ghost of the noble Colla! do I behold thee on that cloud? Who is that dim beside thee? It is the car-borne Truthil. Shall I behold the halls of him that slew Selama's chief! No: I will not behold them, spirits of my love!

Joy rose in the face of Nathos, when he heard the white bosomed maid. Daughter of Selama! thou shinest on my soul. Come, with thy thousands, Cair-bar! the strength of Nathos is returned. And thou, O aged Ufnoth, shalt not hear that thy son has fled. I remember thy words on Etha; when my sails begun to rise: when I spread them towards Ullin, towards the mossy walls of Tura. Thou goest, he said, O Nathos, to the king of shields; to Cuchullin chief of men who never fled from danger. Let not thine arm be feeble: neither be thy thoughts of flight; lest the son of Semo say that Etha's race are weak. His words may come to Ufnoth, and sadden his soul in the hall. — The tear was on his cheek. He gave this shining sword.

I came to Tura's bay: but the halls of Tura were silent. I looked around, and there was none to tell of the chief of Duncaich. I went to the hall of  
his

his shells, where the arms of his fathers hung. But the arms were gone, and aged Lamhor \* sat in tears.

Whence are the arms of steel, said the rising Lamhor? The light of the spear has long been absent from Tura's dusky walls. --- Come ye from the rolling sea? Or from the mournful halls of Temora †.

We come from the sea, I said, from Uínoth's rising towers. We are the sons of Slis sama ††, the daughter of ear-borne Semo. Where is Tura's chief, son of the silent hall? But why should Nathos ask? for I behold thy tears. How did the mighty fall, son of the lonely Tura?

He fell not, Lamhor replied, like the silent star of night, when it shoots through darkness and is no more. But he was like a meteor that falls in a distant land;

\* Lamh - mhor, *mighty hand*.

† Temora was the royal palace of the supreme kings of Ireland. It is here called mournful, on account of the death of Cormac, who was murdered there by Cairbar who usurped his throne.

†† Slis - seamha, *soft bosom*. She was the wife of Uínoth daughter of Semo the chief of the *isle of mist*.

land ; death attends its red course, and itself is the sign of wars. — Mournful are the banks of Lego, and the roar of streamy Lara ! There the hero fell, son of the noble Ufnoth.

And the hero fell in the midst of slaughter, I said with a bursting sigh. His hand was strong in battle ; and death was behind his sword. --- We came to Lego's mournful banks, We found his rising tomb. His companions in battle are there ; his bards of many songs. Three days we mourned over the hero : on the fourth, I struck the shield of Caithbat. The heroes gathered around with joy, and shook their beamy spears.

Corlath was near with his host, the friend of carborne Cairbar. We came like a stream by night, and his heroes fell. When the people of the valley rose, they saw their blood with morning's light. But we rolled away, like wreaths of mist, to Cormac's echoing hall. Our swords rose to defend the king. But Temora's halls were empty. Cormac had fallen in his youth. The king of Erin was no more.

Sadness seized the sons of Ullin, they slowly, gloomily retired : like clouds that, long having threatened

ened rain, retire behind the hills. The sons of Uí-noth moved, in their grief, towards Tura's founding bay. We passed by Seláma, and Cairbar retired like Lano's mist, when it is driven by the winds of the desert.

It was then I beheld thee, O maid, like the light of Etha's sun. Lovely is that beam, I said, and the crowded sigh of my bosom rose. Thou camest in thy beauty, Dar-thula, to Etha's mournful chief. — But the winds have deceived us, daughter of Colla, and the foe is near.

Yes! --- the foe is near, said the rustling strength of Althos \*. I heard their clanging arms on the coast, and saw the dark wreaths of Erin's standard. Distinct is the voice of Cairbar †, and loud as Cromla's falling

\* Althos had just returned from viewing the coast of Lena, whither he had been sent by Nathos, the beginning of the night.

† Cairbar had gathered an army, to the coast of Ulster, in order to oppose Fingal, who prepared for an expedition into Ireland to re-establish the house of Cormac on the throne, which Cairbar had usurped. Between the wings of Cairbar's army was



ling stream. He had seen the dark ship on the sea, before the dusky night came down. His people watch on Lena's \* plain, and lift ten thousand swords.

And let them lift ten thousand swords, said Nathos with a smile. The sons of car-borne Ufnoth will never tremble in danger. Why dost thou roll with all thy foam, thou roaring sea of Ullin? Why do ye ruffle, on your dark wings, ye whistling tempests of the sky? --- Do ye think, ye storms, that ye keep Nathos on the coast? No: his soul detains him, children of the night! — Althos! bring my father's arms: thou seest them beaming to the stars. Bring the spear of Semo †, it stands in the dark-bosomed ship.

He

the bay of Tura, into which the ship of the sons of Ufnoth was driven: so that there was no possibility of their escaping.

\* The scene of the present poem is nearly the same with that of the epic poem in this collection. The heath of Lena and Tura are often mentioned.

† Semo was grandfather to Nathos by the mother's side. The spear mentioned here was given to Ufnoth on his marriage, it being the custom then for  
the

He brought the arms. Nathos clothed his limbs  
in all their shining steel. The stride of the chief is  
lovely: the joy of his eyes terrible. He looks to-  
wards the coming of Cairbar. The wind is rustling  
in his hair. Dar-thula is silent at his side: her look  
is fixed on the chief. She strives to hide the rising  
sigh, and two tears swell in her eyes.

Althos! said the chief of Etha, I see a cave in  
that rock. Place Dar-thula there; and let thy arm  
be strong. Ardan! we meet the foe, and call to bat-  
tle gloomy Cairbar. O that he came in his sounding  
steel, to meet the son of Ufnoth! ——— Dar-thula!  
if thou shalt escape, look not on the falling Nathos.  
Lift thy sails, O Althos, towards the echoing groves  
of Etha.

Tell to the chief †, that his son fell with fame;  
that my sword did not shun the battle. Tell him I  
fell in the midst of thousands, and let the joy of his  
grief

the father of the lady to give his arms to his son-  
in-law. The ceremony used upon these occasions  
is mentioned in other poems.

† Ufnoth.

grief be great. Daughter of Colla ! call the maids to Etha's echoing hall. Let their songs arise from Nathos, when shadowy autumn returns. --- O that the voice of Cona \* might be heard in my praise ! then would my spirit rejoice in the midst of my mountain winds.

And my voice shall praise thee, Nathos chief of the woody Etha ! The voice of Ossian shall rise in thy praise, son of the generous Usnoth ! Why was I not on Lena, when the battle rose ? Then would the sword of Ossian have defended thee, or himself have fallen low.

We sat, that night, in Selma round the strength of the shell. The wind was abroad, in the oaks ; the spirit of the mountain † shrieked. The blast came rustling through the hall, and gently touched my harp. The sound was mournful and low, like the song of the tomb. Fingal heard it first, and the crowded sighs

\* Ossian, the son of Fingal, is, often, poetically called the voice of Cona.

† By the spirit of the mountain is meant that deep and melancholy sound which precedes a storm ; well known to those who live in a high country.

figh of his bosom rose. — Some of my heroes  
are low, said the gray-haired king of Morven. I  
hear the sound of death on the harp of my son. Of-  
fian, touch the sounding string; bid the ferrow rise;  
that their spirits may fly with joy to Morven's woody  
hills.

I touched the harp before the king, the sound  
was mournful and low. Bend forward from your  
clouds, I said, ghosts of my fathers! bend; lay by the  
red terror of your course, and receive the falling  
chief; whether he comes from a distant land, or rises  
from the rolling sea. Let his robe of mist be near;  
his spear that is formed of a cloud. Place an half-  
extinguished meteor by his side, in the form of the  
hero's sword. And, oh! let his countenance be love-  
ly, that his friends may delight in his presence. Bend  
from your clouds, I said, ghosts of my fathers! bend.

Such was my song, in Selma, to the lightly-  
trembling harp. But Nathos was on Uilin's shore,  
surrounded by the night; he heard the voice of the  
foe amidst the roar of tumbling waves. Silent he  
heard their voice, and rested on his spear.

Morning rose, with its beams; the sons of Erin  
appear; like gray rocks, with all their trees, they



spread along the coast. Cairbar stood, in the midst, and grimly smiled when he saw the foe.

Nathos rushed forward, in his strength; nor could Dar-thula stay behind. She came with the hero, lifting her shining spear. And who are these, in their armour, in the pride of youth? Who but the sons of Uinoth, Althos and dark-haired Ardan?

Come, said Nathos, come! chief of the high Temora. Let our battle be on the coast for the white-bosomed maid. His people are not with Nathos; they are behind that rolling sea. Why dost thou bring thy thousands against the chief of Erha? Thou didst fly \* from him, in battle, when his friends were around him.

Youth of the heart of pride, shall Erin's king fight with thee? Thy fathers were not among the renowned, nor of the kings of men. Are the arms of foes in their halls? Or the shields of other times? Cairbar is renowned in Temora, nor does he fight with little men.

The tear starts from car-borne Nathos; he turned his eyes to his brothers. Their spears flew, at once,

\* He alludes to the flight of Cairbar from Selâma.

once, and three heroes lay on earth. Then the light of their swords gleamed on high; the ranks of Erin yield; as a ridge of dark clouds before a blast of wind.

Then Cairbar ordered his people, and they drew a thousand bows. A thousand arrows flew; the sons of Ufnoth fell. They fell like three youngs oaks which stood alone on the hill; the traveller saw the lovely trees, and wondered how they grew so lonely; the blast of the desert came, by night, and laid their green heads low; next day he returned, but they were withered, and the heath was bare.

Dar-thula stood in silent grief, and beheld their fall: no tear is in her eye: but her look is wildly sad. Pale was her cheek; her trembling lips broke short an half-formed word. Her dark hair flew on the wind. — But gloomy Cairbar came. Where is thy lover now? the car-borne chief of Etha? Hast thou beheld the halls of Ufnoth? Or the dark-brown hills of Fingal? My battle had roared on Morven, did not the winds meet Dar-thula? Fingal himself would have been low, and sorrow dwelling in Selma.

Her shield fell from Dar-thula's arm, her breast of snow appeared. It appeared, but it was stained

I s

with

with blood for an arrow was fixed in her side. She fell on the fallen Nathos, like a wreath of snow. Her dark hair spreads on his face, and their blood is mixing round.

Daughter of Colla ! thou art low ! said Cairbar's hundred bards ; silence is at the blue streams of Se-láma, for Truthil's \* race have failed. When wilt thou rise in thy beauty, first of Erin's maids ? Thy sleep is long in the tomb, and the morning distant far. The sun shall not come to thy bed, and say, Awake † Darthula ! awake, thou first of women ! the wind of spring is abroad. The flowers shake their heads on the green hills, the woods wave their growing leaves. Retire, O sun, the daughter of Colla is asleep.

\* Truthil was the founder of Dar-thula's family.

† Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over, and gone. The flowers appear on the earth ; the time of singing is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines, *with* the tender grape, give a *good* smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

SOLOMON'S Song.

asleep. She will not come forth in her beauty: she  
will not move, in the steps of her loveliness.

Such was the song of the bards, when they raised  
the tomb. I sung, afterwards, over the grave,  
when the king of Morven came; when he came to  
green Ullin to fight with car-borne Cairbar.

---

CARRIC-



# CARRIC-THURA:

## A P O E M \*.

---

**H**ast † thou left thy blue course in heaven, golden-haired son of the sky ! The west has opened its gates ; the bed of thy repose is there.  
The

\* Fingal, returning from an expedition which he had made into the Roman province, resolved to visit Cathulla king of Inis-tore, and brother to Comála, whose story is related, at large, in the dramatic poem, published in this collection. Upon his coming in sight of Carric-thura, the palace of Cathulla, he observed a flame on its top, which, in those days, was a signal of distress. The wind drove him into a bay, at some distance from Carric-thura, and he was obliged to pass the night on the shore. Next day he attacked the army of Frothal king of Sora who had besieged Cathulla in his palace of Carric-thura, and took Frothal himself prisoner, after he had engaged him in a single combat. The deliverance of Carric-thura is the subject of  
the

CARRIC - THURA: A POEM. 141

The waves come to behold thy beauty : they lift their trembling heads : they see thee lovely in thy sleep ; but they shrink away with fear. Rest, in thy shadowy cave, O sun ! and let thy return be in joy. —

But let a thousand lights arise to the sound of the harps of Selma : let the beam spread in the hall, the king of shells is returned ! The strife of Crona \* is past,

the poem, but several other episodes are interwoven with it. It appears from tradition, that this poem was addressed to a Culdee, or one of the first Christian missionaries, and that the story the *Spirit of Loda*, supposed to be the ancient Odin of Scandinavia, was introduced by Ossian in opposition to the Culdee's doctrine. Be this as it will, it lets us into Ossian's notions of a superior being ; and shews that he was not addicted to the superstition which prevailed all the world over, before the introduction of Christianity.

† The song of Ullin, with which the poem opens, is in a lyric measure. It was usual with Fingal, when he returned from his expeditions, to send his bards singing before him. This species of triumph is called, by Ossian, the *song of victory*.

\* Ossian has celebrated the *strife of Crona*, in a particular

past, like sounds that are no more : raise the song,  
O bards, the king is returned with his fame !

Such was the song of Ullin, when Fingal returned from battle : when he returned in the fair blushing of youth ; with all his heavy locks. His blue arms were on the hero ; like a gray cloud on the sun, when he moves in his robes of mist, and shews but half his beams. His heroes follow the king : the feast of shells is spread. Fingal turns to his bards, and bids the song to rise.

Voices of echoing Cona ! he said, O bards of other times ! Ye, on whose souls the blue hosts of our fathers rise ! strike the harp in my hall ; and let Fingal hear the song. Pleasant is the joy of grief ! it is like the shower of spring, when it softens the branch of the oak, and the young leaf lifts its green head. Sing on, O bards, tomorrow we lift the sail. My blue course is through the ocean, to Carric-thura's walls ; the mossy walls of Sarno, where Comála dwelt.

ticular poem. This poem is connected with it, but it was impossible for the translator to procure that part which relates to Crona, with any degree of purity.

dwelt. There the noble Cathulla spreads the feast of shells. The boars of his woods are many, and the sound of the chace shall arise.

Cronnan \*, son of song ! said Ullin, Minona, graceful at the harp ! raise the song of Shilric, to please the king of Morven. Let Vinvela come in her beauty, like the showery bow, when its shews its lovely head on the lake, and the setting sun is bright. And she comes, O Fingal ! her voice is soft but sad.

## VINVELA.

My love is a son of the hill. He pursues the flying deer. His gray dogs are panting around him; his bow-string sounds in the wind. Dost thou rest by the fount of the rock, or by the noise of the mountain-stream ? the rushes are nodding with the wind, the mist is flying over the hill. I will approach my love  
unper-

\* One should think that the parts of Shilric and Vinvela were represented by Cronnan and Minona, whose very names denote that they were singers, who performed in public. Cronnan signifies *a mournful sound* ; Minona, or Mìn-'óun, *soft air*. All the dramatic poems of Ossian appear to have been presented before Fingal, upon solemn occasions.



unperceived, and see him from the rock. Lovely I saw thee first by the aged oak of Branno \*; thou wert returning tall from the chase; the fairest among thy friends.

## SHILRIC.

What voice is that I hear? that voice like the summer-wind. --- I sit not by the nodding rushes; I hear not the fount of the rock. Afar, Vinvela †, afar I go to the wars of Fingal. My dogs attend me no more. No more I tread the hill. No more from on high I see thee, fairmoving by the stream of the plain; bright as the bow of heaven; as the moon on the western wave.

## VINVELA,

\* Bran, or Branno, signifies *a mountain-stream*: it is here some river known by that name, in the days of Ossian. There are several small rivers in the north of Scotland still retaining the name of Bran; in particular one which falls into the Tay at Dunkeld.

† Bhín-bheul, *a woman with a melodious voice*. Bh in the Gaelic Language has the same sound with the *v* in English.

## VINVELA.

Then thou art gone, O Shilric! and I am alone  
on the hill. The deer are seen on the brow; void of  
fear they graze along. No more they dread the wind;  
no more the rustling tree. The hunter is far removed;  
he is in the field of graves. Strangers! sons of the  
waves! spare my lovely Shilric.

## SHILRIC.

If fall I must in the field, raise high my grave,  
Vinvela. Gray stones and heaped-up earth, shall  
mark me to future times. When the hunter shall sit  
by the mound, and produce his food at noon, "So-  
me warrior rests here," he will say; and my fame  
shall live in his praise. Remember me, Vinvela,  
when low on earth I lie!

## VINVELA.

Yes! --- I will remember thee --- Indeed my  
Shilric will fall. What shall I do, my love! when  
thou art gone for ever? Through these hills I will go  
at noon: I will go through the silent heath. There  
I will see the chace. Indeed, my Shilric will fall;  
but I will remember him.

And I remember the chief, said the king of woo-  
dy Morven; he consumed the battle in his rage. But

K

now

now my eyes behold him not. I met him, one day,  
on the hill ; his cheek was pale ; his brow was dark.  
The sigh was frequent in his breast : his steps were  
towards the desert. But now he is not in the crowd  
of my chiefs, when the sounds of my shields arise.  
Dwells he in the narrow house \*, the chief of high  
Carmora ? †

Cronnan ! said Ullin of other times , raise the  
song of Shilric ; when he returned to his hills, and  
Vinvcla was no more. He leaned on her gray mossy  
stone ; he thought Vinvcla lived. He saw her fair-  
moving †† on the plain : but the bright form lasted  
not : the sun -beam fled from the field, and she was  
seen no more. Hear the song of Shilric, it is soft  
but sad.

I sit by the mossy fountain ; on the top of the  
hill of winds. One tree is rustling above me. Dark  
waves

\* The grave.

† Carn - mór, *high rocky bill*.

†† The distinction, which the ancient Scots made be-  
tween good and bad spirits, was, that the former  
appeared sometimes in the day-time in lonely un-  
frequented places, but the latter seldom but by  
night, and always in a dismal gloomy scene.

waves roll over the heath. The lake is troubled below. The deer descend from the hill. No hunter at a distance is seen; no whistling cow-herd is nigh. It is mid-day: but all is silent. Sad are my thoughts alone. Didst thou but appear, O my love, a wanderer on the heath! thy hair floating on the wind behind thee; thy bosom heaving on the sight; thine eyes full of tears for thy friends, whom the mist of the hill had concealed! Thee I would comfort my love, and bring thee to thy father's house.

But is it she that there appears, like a beam of light on the heath? bright as the moon in autumn, as the sun in a summer-storm, comest thou, lovely maid, over rocks, over mountains to me?—— She speaks: but how weak her voice! like the breeze in the reeds of the pool.

Returnest thou safe from the war? Where are thy friends, my love? I heard of thy death on the hill; I heard and mourned thee, Shilric!

Yes, my fair, I return; but I alone of my race. Thou shalt see them no more: their graves I raised on the plain. But why art thou on the desert hill? Why on the heath, alone?



Alone I am, O Shilric! alone in the winterhouse.  
With grief for thee I expired. Shilric, I am pale  
in the tomb.

She fleets, she sails away; as gray mist before  
the wind! --- and, wilt thou not stay, my love,  
Stay and behold my tears? fair thou appearest, Vin-  
vela! fair thou wast, when alive!

By the mossy fountain I will sit; on the top of  
the hill of winds. When mid-day is silent around,  
converse, O my love, with me! come on the wings  
of the gale! on the blast of the mountain, come!  
Let me hear thy voice, as thou passest, when mid-  
day is silent around.

Such was the song of Cronnan, on the night of  
Selma's joy. But morning rose in the east; the blue  
waters rolled in light. Fingal bade his sails to rise,  
and the winds come rustling from their hills. Inis-  
tore rose to fight, and Carriethura's mossy towers.  
But the sign of distress was on their top: the green  
flame edged with smoke, The king of Morven struck  
his breast: he assumed, at once, his spear. His dar-  
kened brow bends forward to the coast: he looks  
back to the lagging winds. His hair is disordered on  
his back. The silence of the king is terrible.

Night

Night came down on the sea; Rotha's bay received the ship. A rock bends along the coast with all its echoing wood. On the top is the circle \* of Loda, and the mossy stone of power. A narrow plain spreads beneath, covered with grass and aged trees, which the midnight winds, in their wrath, had torn from the shaggy rock. The blue course of a stream is there: and the lonely blast of ocean pursues the thistle's beard.

The flame of three oaks arose: the feast is spread around: but the soul of the king is sad, for Carric-thura's battling chief. The wan, cold moon rose, in the east. Sleep descended on the youths: Their blue helmets glitter to the beam; the fading fire decays. But sleep did not rest on the king: he rose in the midst of his arms, and slowly ascended the hill to behold the flame of Sarno's tower.

The flame was dim and distant; the moon hid her red face in the east. A blast came from the mountain, and bore, on its wings, the spirit of  
Loda.

\* *The circle of Loda* is supposed to be a place of worship among the Scandinavians, as the spirit of Loda is thought to be the same with their god Odin.

Loda. He came to his place in his terrors \*, and he shook his dusky spear, --- His eyes appear like flames in his dark face; and his voice is like distant thunder. Fingal advanced with the spear of his strength, and raised his voice on high.

Son of night, retire: call thy winds and fly! Why dost thou come to my presence, with thy shadowy arms? Do I fear thy gloomy form, dismal spirit of Loda? Weak is thy shield of clouds: feeble is that meteor, thy sword. The blast rolls them together; and thou thyself dost vanish. Fly from my presence son of night! call thy winds and fly!

Dost thou force me from my place, replied the hollow voice? The people bend before me. I turn the battle in the field of the valiant. I look on the nations and they vanish: my nostrils pour the blast of death. I come † abroad on the winds; the tempests are before my face. But my dwelling is calm, above the clouds, the fields of my rest are pleasant.

Dwell

- \* He is described, in a simile, in the poem concerning the death of Cuchullin.
- \* There is a great resemblance between the terrors of this mock divinity, and those of the true God, as they are described in the 18th Psalm.

Dwell then in thy calm field, said Fingal, and let Comhal's son be forgot. Do my steps ascend, from my hills, into thy peaceful plains? Do I meet thee, with a spear, on thy cloud, spirit of dismal Loda? Why then dost thou frown on Fingal? or shake thine airy spear? But thou frownest in vain: I never fled from mighty men. And shall the sons of the wind frighten the king of Morven? No: he knows the weakness of their arms.

Fly to thy land, replied the form: receive the wind and fly. The blasts are in the hollow of my hand: the course of the storm is mine. The king of Sora is my son, he bends at the stone of my power. His battle is around Carric-thura; and he will prevail. Fly tho thy land, son of Comhal, or feel my flaming wrath.

He lifted high his shadowy spear; and bent forward his terrible height. But the king, advancing, drew his sword; the blade of darkbrown Luno \*. The gleaming path of the steel winds through the gloomy ghost. The form fell shapeless into air, like a column

\* The famous sword of Fingal, made by Lun, or Luno, a smith of Lochlin.



lumn of smoke, which the staff of the boy disturbs, as it rises from the half-extinguished furnace.

The spirit of Loda shrieked, as, rolled into himself, he rose on the wind. Inistore shook at the sound. The waves heard it on the deep: they stopped, in their course, with fear: the companions of Fingal started, at once; and took their heavy spears. They missed the king: they rose with rage; all their arms resound.

The moon came forth in the east. The king returned in the gleam of his arms. The joy of his youths was great: their souls settled, as a sea from a storm. Ullin raised the song of gladness. The hills of Inistore rejoiced. The flame of the oak arose; and the tales of heroes are told.

But Frothal, Sora's battling king, sits in sadness beneath a tree. The host spreads around Carric-thura. He looks towards the walls with rage. He longs for the blood of Cathulla, who, once, overcame the king in war. — When Annir reigned \*  
in

\* Annir was also the father of Erragon, who was killed after the death of his brother Frothal. The death of Erragon is the subject of *the battle of Lora*, a poem in this collection.

in Sora, the father of car-borne Frothal, a blast rose on the sea, and carried Frothal to Inistore. Three days he feasted in Sarno's halls, and saw the slow rolling eyes of Comála. He loved her, in the rage of youth, and rushed to seize the white-armed maid. Cathulla met the chief. The gloomy battle rose. Frothal is bound in the hall: three days he pined alone. On the fourth, Sarno sent him to his ship, and he returned to his land. But wrath darkened in his soul against the noble Cathulla. When Annir's stone † of fame arose, Frothal came in his strength. The battle burned round Carric-thura, and Sarno's mossy walls.

Morning rose on Inistore. Frothal struck his dark-brown shield. His chiefs started at the sound; they stood, but their eyes were turned to the sea. They saw Fingal coming in his strength; and first the noble Thubar spoke.

Who comes like the stag of the mountain, with all his herd behind him? Frothal, it is a foe; I see  
his

† That is, after the death of Annir. To erect the stone of one's fame, was, in other words, to say that the person was dead.

his forward spear. Perhaps it is the king of Morven, Fingal the first of men. His actions are well known on Gormal; the blood of his foes is in Starno's halls. Shall I ask the peace \* of kings? He is like the thunder of heaven.

Son of the feeble hand, said Frothal, shall my days begin in darkness? Shall I yield before I have conquered in battle, chief of streamy Tora? The people would say in Sora, Frothal flew forth like a meteor; but the dark cloud met it, and it is no more. No: Thubar, I will never yield; my fame shall surround me like light. No: I will never yield, king of streamy Tora.

He went forth with the stream of his people, but they met a rock: Fingal stood unmoved, broken they rolled back from his side. Nor did they roll in safety; the spear of the king pursued their flight. The field is covered with heroes. A rising hill preserved the flying host.

Frothal saw their flight. The rage of his bosom rose. He bent his eyes to the ground, and called the noble Thubar. — Thubar! my people fled. My  
fame

\* Honourable terms of peace.

fame has ceased to rise. I will fight the king; I feel my burning soul. Send a bard to demand the combat. Speak not against Frothal's words. --- But, Thubar! I love a maid; she dwells by Thano's stream, the white-bosomed daughter of Herman, Utha with the softly-rolling eyes. She feared the daughter \* of Inistore, and her soft sighs rose, at my departure. Tell to Utha that I am low; but that my soul delighted in her.

Such were his words, resolved to fight. But the soft sigh of Utha was near. She had followed her hero over the sea, in the armour of a man. She rolled her eye on the youth, in secret, from beneath a glittering helmet. But now she saw the bard as he went, and the spear fell thrice from her hand. Her loose hair flew on the wind. Her white breast rose, with sighs. She lifted up her eyes to the king; she would speak, but thrice she failed.

Fingal heard the words of the bard; he came in the strength of steel. They mixed their deathful spears,

\* By the daughter of Inistore, Frothal means Comála, of whose death Utha probably had not heard; consequently she feared that the former passion of Frothal for Comála might return.



spears, and raised the gleam of their swords. But the steel of Fingal descended and cut Frothal's shield in twain. His fair side is exposed ; half bent he foresees his death.

Darkness gathered on Utha's soul. The tear rolled down her cheek. She rushed to cover the chief with her shield ; but a fallen oak met her steps. She fell on her arm of snow ; her shield, her helmet flew wide. Her white bosom heaved to the sight ; her dark-brown hair is spread on earth.

Fingal pitied the white-armed maid : he stayed the uplifted sword. The tear was in the eye of the king, as, bending forward, he spoke. King of streamy Sora ! fear not the sword of Fingal. It was never stained with the blood of the vanquished ; it never pierced a fallen foe. Let thy people rejoice along the blue waters of Tora : let the maids of thy love be glad. Why shouldest thou fall in thy youth, king of streamy Sora ?

Frothal heard the words of Fingal, and saw the rising maid : they \* stood in silence, in their beauty : like two young trees of the plain, when the shower of spring is on their leaves, and the loud winds are laid.

Daugh.

\* Frothal and Utha,

Daughter of Herman, said Frothal, didst thou come from Tora's streams; didst thou come, in thy beauty, to behold thy warrior low? But he was low before the mighty, maid of the slow-rolling eye! The feeble did not overcome the son of car-borne Annir. Terrible art thou, O king of Morven! in battles of the spear. But, in peace, thou art like the sun, when he looks through a silent shower: the flowers lift their fair heads before him; and the gales shake their rustling wings. O that thou wert in Sora! that my feast were spread! --- The future kings of Sora would see thy arms and rejoice. They would rejoice at the fame of their fathers, who beheld the mighty Fingal.

Son of Annir, replied the king, the fame of Sora's race shall be heard. --- When chiefs are strong in battle, then does the song arise! But if their swords are stretched over the feeble; if the blood of the weak has stained their arms; the bard shall forget them in the song, and their tombs shall not be known. The stranger shall come and build there, and remove the heaped-up earth. An half-worn sword shall rise before him; and bending above it, he will say, "These  
" are

" are the arms of chiefs of old, but their names are  
 " not in song. " ——— Come thou, O Frothal, to  
 the feast of Inistore; let the maid of thy love be  
 there; and our faces will brighten with joy.

Fingal took his spear, moving in the steps of his  
 might. The gates of Carric-thura are opened. The  
 feast of shells is spread. --- The voice of Ullin was  
 heard; the harp of Selma was strung. --- Utha re-  
 joiced in his presence; and demanded the song of  
 grief; the big tear hung in her eye, when the soft \*  
 Crimora spoke. Crimora the daughter of Rinval, who  
 dwelt at Lotha's † mighty stream. The tale was long,  
 but lovely; and pleased the blushing maid of Tora.

CRI -

\* There is a propriety in introducing this episode,  
 as the situations of Crimora and Utha were so si-  
 milar.

† Lotha was the ancient name of one of the great  
 rivers in the north of Scotland. The only one of  
 them that still retains a name of a like sound is  
 Lochy, in Invernesshire; but wheter it is the ri-  
 ver mentioned here, the translator will not pretend  
 to say.

## CRIMORA \*.

Who cometh from the hill, like a cloud tinged  
with the beam of the west? Whose voice is that, loud  
as the wind, but pleasant as the harp of Carril? † It  
is my love in the light of steel; but sad is his darke-  
ned brow. Live the mighty race of Fingal? or what  
disturbs my Connal? ††

## CONNAL.

They live. I saw them return from the chace,  
like a stream of light. The sun was on their shields.  
Like a ridge of fire they descended the hill. Loud is  
the voice of the youth; the war, my love, is near.  
To-morrow the terrible Dargo comes to try the  
force of our race. The race of Fingal he defies;  
the race of battle and wounds. CRI-

\* Cri - móra, *a woman of a great soul.*

† Perhaps the Carril mentioned here is the same  
with Carril the son of Kinsena, Cuchullin's bard.  
The name itself is proper to any bard, as it signifies  
*a sprightly and harmonious sound.*

†† Connal, the son of Diaran, was one of the most  
famous heroes of Fingal; he was slain in a battle  
against Dargo a Briton; but whether by the hand  
of the enemy, or that of his mistress, tradition  
does not determine.



CRIMORA.

Connal, I saw his sails like gray mist on the  
fable wave. They slowly came to land. Connal,  
many are the warriors of Dargo!

CONNAL.

Bring me thy father's shield; the bossy, iron  
shield of Rinval; that shield like the full moon  
when it moves darkened through heaven.

CRIMORA.

That shield I bring, O Connal; but it did  
not defend my father. By the spear of Gormar he  
fell. Thou may'st fall, O Connal!

CONNAL.

Fall indeed I may: But raise my tomb, Crimora.  
Gray stones, a mound of earth, shall keep my me-  
mory. Bend thy red eye over my tomb, and beat  
thy mournful heaving breast. Though fair thou art,  
my love, as the light; more pleasant than the gale  
of the hill; yet I will not stay. Raise my tomb,  
Crimora.

CRIMORA.

Then give me those arms of light; that sword,  
and that spear of steel. I shall meet Dargo with thee,  
and

and aid my lovely Connal. Farewel, ye rocks of Ardven ! ye deer ! and ye streams of the hill ! --- We shall return no more. Our tombs are distant far.

And did they return no more ? said Utha's bursting sigh. Fell the mighty in battle, and did Crimora live ? --- Her steps were lonely, and her soul was sad for Connal. Was he not young and lovely ; like the beam of the setting sun ? Ullin saw the virgin's tear, and took the softly-trembling harp : the song was lovely, but sad, and silence was in Carrië-thura.

Autumn is dark on the mountains ; gray mist rests on the hills. The whirlwind is heard on the heath. Dark rolls the river through the narrow plain. A tree stands alone on the hill, and marks the slumbering Connal. The leaves whirl round with the wind, and strew the grave of the dead. At times are seen here the ghosts of the deceased, when the musing hunter alone stalks slowly over the heath.

Who can reach the source of thy race, O Connal ? and who recount thy fathers ? Thy family grew like an oak on the mountain, which meeteth the wind with its lofty head. But now it is torn from the earth. Who shall supply the place of Connal ?

Here was the din of arms; and here the groans of the dying. Bloody are the wars of Fingal! O Connal! it was here thou didst fall. Thine arm was like a storm; thy sword a beam of the sky; thy height, a rock on the plain; thine eyes, a furnace of fire. Louder than a storm was thy voice, in the battles of thy steel. Warriors fell by thy sword, as the thistle by the staff of a boy.

Dargo the mighty came on, like a cloud of thunder. His brows were contracted and dark. His eyes like two caves in a rock. Bright rose their swords on each side; dire was the clang of their steel.

The daughter of Rinval was near; Crimora bright in the armour of man; her yellow hair is loose behind, her bow is in her hand. She followed the youth to the war, Connal her much-beloved. She drew the string on Dargo; but erring pierced her Connal. He falls like an oak on the plain; like a rock from the shaggy hill. What shall she do, hapless maid! -- He bleeds; her Connal dies. All the night long she cries, and all the day, O Connal, my love, and my friend! With grief the sad mourner dies.

Earth

Earth here incloses the loveliest pair on the hill.  
The grass grows between the stones of the tomb; I  
often sit in the mournful shade. The wind sighs  
through the grass; their memory rushes on my mind.  
Undisturbed you now sleep together; in the tomb of  
the mountain you rest alone.

And soft be your rest, said Utha, children of  
streamy Lota. I will remember you with tears, and  
my secret song shall rise; when the wind is in the  
groves of Tora, and the stream is roaring near.  
Then shall ye come on my soul, with all your  
lovely grief.

Three days feasted the kings: on the fourth  
their white sails arose. The winds of the north  
carry the ship of Fingal to Morven's woody land.  
—— But the spirit of Loda sat, in his cloud,  
behind the ships of Frothal. He hung forward  
with all his blasts, and spread the white-bosomed  
sails. —— The wounds of his form were not  
forgot; he still feared \* the hand of the king.

\* The story of Fingal and the spirit of Loda, suppo-  
sed to be the famous Odin, is the most extravagant



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fiction in all Ossian's poems. It is not, however, without precedents in the best poets; and it must be said for Ossian, that he says nothing but what perfectly agreed with the notions of the times, concerning ghosts. They thought the souls of the dead were material, and consequently susceptible of pain. Whether a proof could be drawn from this passage, that Ossian had no notion of a divinity, I shall leave to others to determine: it appears, however, that he was of opinion, that superior beings ought to take no notice of what passed among men.

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# SONGS OF SELMA \*.

---

Star of the descending night ! fair is thy light in  
the west ! thou liftest thy unshorn head from  
thy cloud : thy steps are stately on thy hill. What  
doft

- This poem fixes the antiquity of a custom, which is well known to have prevailed afterwards, in the north of Scotland, and in Ireland. The bards, at an annual feast, provided by the king or chief, repeated their poems, and such of them as were thought, by him, worthy of being preserved, were carefully taught to their children, in order to have them transmitted to posterity. — It was one of those occasions that afforded the subject of the present poem to Ossian. — It is called in the original, The Songs of Selma, which title it was thought proper to adopt in the translation.

The poem is entirely lyric, and has great variety of versification. The address to the evening star, with which it opens, has, in the original, all the harmony that numbers could give it ; flow-

dost thou behold in the plain? The stormy winds are laid. The murmur of the torrent comes from afar. Roaring waves climb the distant rock. The flies of evening are on their feeble wings, and the hum of their course is on the field. What dost thou behold, fair light? But thou dost smile and depart. The waves come with joy around thee, and bathe thy lovely hair. Farewel, thou silent beam! --- Let the light of Ossian's soul arise,

And it does arise in its strength! I behold my departed friends. Their gathering is on Lora, as in the days that are past. — Fingal comes like a watry column of mist; his heroes are around. And see the bards of the song, gray-haired Ullin; stately Ryno; Alpin \*, with the tuneful voice, and the soft com-

wing down with all that tranquillity and softness, which the scene described naturally inspires. — Three of the songs which are introduced in this paice, were published among the fragments of ancient poetry, printed last year.

\* Alpin is from the same root with Albion, or rather Albin, the ancient name of Britain; Alp, *high in land,*

complaint of Minona ! — How are ye changed, my friends, since the days of Selma's feast ! when we contended, like the gales of the spring, that, flying over the hill, by turns bend the feebly-whistling grass.

Minona then came forth in her beauty ; with down-cast look and tearful eye ; her hair flew slowly on the blast that rushed unfrequent from the hill. — The souls of the heroes were sad when she raised the tuneful voice ; for often had they seen the grave of Salgar \*, and the dark dwelling of white-bosomed Colma †. Colma left alone on the hill, with all her voice of music ! Salgar promised to come : but the night descended round. --- Hear the voice of Colma , when she sat alone on the hill !

L 4

COLMA,

*land, or country.* The present name of our island has its origin in the Celtic tongue ; so that those who derived it from any other, betrayed their ignorance of the ancient language of our country. —

*Britain* comes from *Breac't in*, *variegated island*, so called from the face of the country, from the natives painting themselves, or from their party-coloured cloaths.

\* Sealg-'er, *a hunter.*

† Cul-math, *a woman with fine hair.*



## COLMA.

It is night; --- I am alone, forlorn on the hill  
of storms. The wind is heard in the mountain. The  
torrent shrieks down the rock. No hut receives me  
from the rain; forlorn on the hill of winds.

Rise, moon! from behind thy clouds; stars of  
the night appear! Lead me, some light, to the place  
where my love rests from the toil of the chase! his  
bow near him, unstrung; his dogs panting around  
him. But here I must sit alone, by the rock of the  
mossy stream. The stream and the wind roar; nor  
can I hear the voice of my love.

Why delays my Salgar, why the son of the hill,  
his promise? Here is the rock, and the tree; and  
here the roaring stream. Thou didst promise with  
night to be here. Ah! whither is my Salgar gone?  
With thee I would fly, my father; with thee,  
my brother of pride: Our race have long been  
foes; but we are not foes, O Salgar!

Cease a little while, O wind! stream, be thou  
silent a while, let my voice be heard over the heath;  
let my wanderer hear me. Salgar! it is I who  
call. Here is the tree, and the rock. Salgar, my  
love! I am here. Why delayest thou thy coming?

Lo!

Lo! the moon appeareth. The flood is bright  
in the vale. The rocks are grey on the face of the  
hill. But I see him not on the brow; his dogs before  
him tell not that he is coming. Here I must sit alone.

But who are these that lie beyond me on the  
heath? Are they my love and my brother? --- Speak  
to me, O my friends! they answer not. My soul is  
tormented with fears. — Ah! they are dead.  
Their swords are red from the fight. O my brother!  
my brother! why hast thou slain my Salgar? why,  
O Salgar! hast thou slain my brother? Dear were ye  
both to me! what shall I say in your praise? Thou  
wert fair on the hill among thousands; he was terrible  
in fight. Speak to me; hear my voice, sons of my  
love! But alas! they are silent; silent for ever! Cold  
are their breasts of clay!

Oh! from the rock of the hill; from the top of  
the windy mountain, speak ye ghosts of the dead!  
speak, I will not be afraid. --- Whither are ye gone  
to rest? In what cave of the hill shall I find you?  
No feeble voice is on the wind: no answer half-drown-  
ed in the storms of the hill.

I sit in my grief. I wait for morning in my tears.  
Rear the tomb, ye friends of the dead; but close it

not till Colma come. My life flies away like a dream : why should I stay behind? Here shall I rest with my friends, by the stream of the sounding rock. When night comes on the hill ; when the wind is on the heath ; my ghost shall stand in the wind, and mourn the death of my friends. The hunter shall hear from his booth. He shall fear but love my voice. For sweet shall my voice be for my friends ; for pleasant were they both to me.

Such was thy song, Minona softly-blushing maid of Tormian. Our tears descended for Colma, and our souls were sad. --- Ullin came with the harp, and gave the song of Alpin. --- The voice of Alpin was pleasant : the soul of Ryno was a beam of fire. But they had rested in the narrow house : and their voice was not heard in Selma. ——— Ullin had returned one day from the chase, before the heroes fell. He heard their strife on the hill ; their song was soft but sad. They mourned the fall of Morar, first of mortal men. His soul was like the soul of Fingal ; his sword like the sword of Oscar. --- But he fell, and his father mourned : his sister's eyes were full of tears. ——— Minona's eyes were full of tears, the sister of car-  
borne

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borne Morar. She retired from the song of Ullin, like the moon in the west, when she foresees the shower, and hides her fair head in a cloud. --- I touched the harp, with Ullin; the song of mourning rose.

RYNO.

The wind and the rain are over: calm is the noon of day. The clouds are divided in heaven. Over the green hills flies the inconstant sun. Red through the stony vale comes down the stream! but more sweet is the voice I hear. It is the voice of Alpin, the son of song, mourning for the dead. Bent is his head of age, and red his tearful eye. Alpin, thou son of song, why alone on the silent hill? why complainest thou, as a blast in the wood; as a wave on the lonely shore?

ALPIN.

My tears, O Ryno! are for the dead; my voice, for the inhabitants of the grave. Tall thou art on the hill; fair among the sons of the plain. But thou shalt fall like Morar\*; and the mourner shall sit on thy tomb. The hills shall know thee no more; thy bow shall lie in the hall, unstrung.

Thou

\* Mór-ér, *great man*.



Thou wert swift, O Morar! as a roe on the hill,  
 terrible as a meteor of fire. Thy wrath was as the  
 storm. Thy sword in battle, as lightning in the  
 field. Thy voice was like a stream after rain; like  
 thunder on distant hills. Many fell by thy arm: they  
 were consumed in the flames of thy wrath.

But when thou didst return from war, how peaceful  
 was thy brow! Thy face was like the sun after  
 rain; like the moon in the silence of night; calm as  
 the breast of the lake when the loud wind is laid.

Narrow is thy dwelling now; dark the place of  
 thine abode. With three steps I compass thy grave,  
 O thou who wast so great before! Four stones, with  
 their heads of moss, are the only memorial of thee.  
 A tree with scarce a leaf, long grass which whistles in  
 the wind, mark to the hunter's eye the grave of the  
 mighty Morar. Morar! thou art low indeed. Thou  
 hast no mother to mourn thee; no maid with her  
 tears of love. Dead is she that brought thee forth.  
 Fallen is the daughter of Morglan.

Who on his staff is this? who is this, whose  
 head is white with age, whose eyes are red with tears,  
 who

who quakes at every step. --- It is thy father \*, O Morar ! the father of no son but thee. He heard of thy fame in battle ; he heard of foes dispersed. He heard of Morar's fame : why did he not hear of his wound ? Weep, thou father of Morar ! weep ; but thy son heareth thee not. Deep is the sleep of the dead ; low their pillow of dust. No more shall he hear thy voice ; no more shall he awake at thy call. When shall it be morn in the grave, to bid the slumberer awake ?

Farewel, thou bravest of men ! thou conqueror in the field ! but the field shall see thee no more ; nor the dark wood be lightened with the splendor of thy steel. Thou hast left no son. But the song shall preserve thy name. Future times shall hear of thee ; they shall hear of the fallen Morar.

The grief of all arose, but most the bursting sigh of Armin †. He remembers the death of his son, who  
fell

\* Torman, the son of Carthul, lord of I-mora, one of the western isles.

† Armin, a hero. He was chief or petty king of Gorma, i. e. *the blue island*, supposed to be one of the Hebrides.

fell in the days of his youth. Carmor \* was near the hero, the chief of the echoing Galmal. Why bursts the sigh of Armin, he said? Is there a cause to mourn? The song comes, with its music, to melt and please the soul. It is like soft mist, that, rising from a lake, pours on the silent vale; the green flowers are filled with dew, but the sun returns in his strength, and the mist is gone. Why art thou sad, O Armin, chief of sea-surrounded Gorma?

Sad! I am indeed: nor small my cause of woe! --- Carmor, thou hast lost no son; thou hast lost no daughter of beauty. Colgar the valiant lives; and Annira fairest maid. The boughs of thy family flourish, O Carmor! but Armin is the last of his race. Dark is thy bed, O Daura! and deep thy sleep in the tomb. --- When shalt thou awake with thy songs, with all thy voice of music?

Rise, winds of autumn, rise; blow upon the dark hearth! streams of the mountains, roar! howl, ye tempests, in the top of the oak! walk through broken clouds, O moon! show by intervals thy pale face! bring to my mind that sad night, when all my chil-

† Cear-mór, a tall dark-complexioned man.

children fell; when Arindal the mighty fell; when Daura the lovely failed.

Daura, my daughter! thou wert fair; fair as the moon on the hills of Fura\*; white as the driven snow; sweet as the breathing gale. Arindal, thy bow was strong, thy spear was swift in the field: thy look was like mist on the wave; thy shield, a red cloud in a storm. Armar, renowned in war, came, and fought Daura's love; he was not long denied; fair was the hope of their friends.

Erath, son of Odgal, repined; for his brother was slain by Armar. He came disguised like a son of the sea: fair was his skiff on the wave; white his locks of age; calm his serious brow. Fairest of women, he said, lovely daughter of Armin! a rock not distant in the sea, bears a tree on its side; red shines the fruit afar. There Armar waits for Daura. I came to carry his love along the rolling sea.

She went; and she called on Armar. Nought answered, but the son † of the rock. Armar, my  
love!

\* Fuar-a, *cold island*.

† By *the son of the rock* the poet means the echoing back of the human voice from a rock. The vul-  
gar



love! my love! why tormentest thou me with fear?  
 hear, son of Ardnart, hear: it is Daura who calleth  
 thee! Erath the traitor fled laughing to the land. She  
 lifted up her voice, and cried for her brother and her  
 father. Arindal! Armin! none to relieve your Daura.

Her voice came over the sea. Arindal my son  
 descended from the hill; rough in the spoils of the  
 chase. His arrows rattled by his side; his bow was  
 in his hand: five dark gray dogs attended his steps.  
 He saw fierce Erath on the shore: he seized and bound  
 him to an oak. Thick bend the thongs \* of the  
 hide around his limbs; he loads the wind with his  
 groans.

Arindal ascends the wave in his boat, to bring  
 Daura to land. Armar came in his wrath, and let fly  
 the gray-feathered shaft. It sung; it sunk in thy  
 heart, O Arindal my son! for Erath the traitor thou  
 diedst.

gar were of opinion, that this repetition of sound  
 was made by a spirit within the rock; and they,  
 on that account, called it *mac-talla; the son who  
 dwells in the rock.*

\* The poet here only means that Erath was bound  
 with leathern thongs.

diedst. The oar is stopped at once ; he panted on the rock and expired. What is thy grief, O Daura, when round thy feet is poured thy brother's blood.

The boat is broken in twain by the waves. Armar plunges into the sea, to rescue his Daura, or die. Sudden a blast from the hill comes over the waves. He sunk, and he rose no more.

Alone, on the sea-beat rock, my daughter was heard to complain. Frequent and loud were her cries ; nor could her father relieve her. All night I stood on the shore. I saw her by the faint beam of the moon. All night I heard her cries. Loud was the wind ; and the rain beat hard on the side of the mountain. Before morning appeared, her voice was weak. It died away, like the evening-breeze among the grass of the rocks. Spent with grief she expired. And left thee Armin alone : gone is my strength in the war, and fallen my pride among women.

When the storms of the mountain come ; when the north lifts the waves on high ; I sit by the founding shore, and look on the fatal rock. Often by the setting moon I see the ghosts of my children. Half-viewless, they walk in mournful conference

M

toget-

together. Will none of you speak in pity? They do not regard their father. I am sad, O Carmor, nor shall my cause of woe!

Such were the words of the bards in the days of song; when the king heard the music of harps, and the tales of other times. The chiefs gathered from all their hills, and heard the lovely sound. They praised the voice \* of Cona! the first among a thousand bards. But age is now on my tongue; and my soul has failed. I hear, sometimes, the ghosts of bards, and learn their pleasant song. But memory fails in my mind; I hear the call of years. They say, as they pass along, why does Ossian sing? Soon shall he lie in the narrow house, and no bard shall raise his fame.

Roll on, ye dark-brown years, for ye bring no joy on your course. Let the tomb open to Ossian, for his strength has failed. The sons of song are gone to rest: my voice remains, like a blast, that roars, lonely, on a sea-surrounded rock, after the winds are laid. The dark moss whistles there, and the distant mariner sees the waving trees.

\* Ossian is sometimes poetically called *the voice of Cona*.

# CALTHON AND COLMAL:

## A P O E M \*.

---

Pleasant is the voice of thy song, thou lonely dweller of the rock. It comes on the sound of the stream, along the narrow vale. My soul awakes,

\* This piece, as many more of Ossian's compositions, is addressed to one of the first Christian missionaries. — The story of the poem is handed down, by tradition, thus — In the country of the Britons between the walls, two chiefs lived in the days of Fingal, Dunthalgo, lord of Teutha, supposed to be the Tweed; and Rathmor, who dwelt at Clutna, well known to be the river Clyde. — Rathmor was not more renowned for his generosity and hospitality, than Dunthalgo was infamous for his cruelty and ambition. — Dunthalgo, through envy, or on account of some private feuds, which subsisted between the families, murdered Rathmor at a feast; but being afterwards touched with remorse, he educated the two sons of Rathmor, Cal-



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awakes, O stranger! in the midst of my hall. I stretch my hand to the spear, as in the days of other years. --- I stretch my hand, but it is feeble; and the sigh of my bosom grows. --- Wilt thou not listen, son of the rock, to the song of Ossian? My soul is full of other times; the joy of my youth returns.

thou and Colmar, in his own house. — They growing up to man's estate, dropped some hints that they intended to revenge the death of their father, upon which Dunthalmo shut them up in two caves on the banks of Teutha, intending to take them off privately. — Colmal, the daughter of Dunthalmo, who was secretly in love with Calthon, helped him to make his escape from prison, and fled with him to Fingal, disguised in the habit of a young warrior, and implored his aid against Dunthalmo. — Fingal sent Ossian with three hundred men, to Colmar's relief. — Dunthalmo having previously murdered Colmar, came to a battle with Ossian; but he was killed by that hero, and his army totally defeated.

Calthon married Colmal, his deliverer; and Ossian returned to Morven.

turns. Thus the sun \* appears in the west, after the steps of his brightness have moved behind a storm; the green hills lift their dewy heads: the blue streams rejoice in the vale. The aged hero comes forth on his staff, and his grey hair glitters in the beam.

Dost thou not behold, son of the rock, a shield in Ossian's hall? It is marked with the strokes of battle; and the brightness of its bosses has failed. That shield the great Dunthalmo bore, the chief of streamy Teutha. — Dunthalmo bore it in battle, before

\* If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet  
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,  
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds  
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.

MILTON.

— Their fair sun-shine in summer's day;  
— When a dreadful storm away is flit  
Through the broad world doth spread his goodly day;  
At sight whereof each bird that sits on spray,  
And every beast that to his den was fled,  
Come forth afresh out of their late dismay,  
And to the light lift up their drooping head.

SPENCER.

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before he fell by Ossian's spear. Listen, son of the rock, to the tale of other years. ---

Rathmor was a chief of Clutha. The feeble dwelt in his hall. The gates of Rathmor were never closed; his feast was always spread. The sons of the stranger came, and blessed the generous chief of Clutha. Bards raised the song, and touched the harp: and joy brightened on the face of the mournful. --- Dunthalmo came, in his pride, and rushed into the combat of Rathmor. The chief of Clutha overcame: the rage of Dunthalmo rose. --- He came, by night, with his warriors; and the mighty Rathmor fell. He fell in his halls, where his feast was often spread for strangers. —

Colmar and Calthon were young, the sons of car-borne Rathmor. They came, in the joy of youth, into their father's hall. They behold him in his blood, and their bursting tears descend. --- The soul of Dunthalmo melted, when he saw the children of youth; he brought them to Alteutha's \* walls; they

\* Al-teutha, or rather Balteutha, *the town of Tweed*, the name of Dunthalmo's seat. It is observable that all the names in this poem, are derived from the

they grew in the house of their foe. --- They bent the bow in his presence ; and came forth to his battles.

They saw the fallen walls of their fathers ; they saw the green thorn in the hall. Their tears descended in secret ; and, at times, their faces were mournful. Dunthalgo beheld their grief : his darkening soul designed their death. He closed them in two caves, on the echoing banks of Teutha. The sun did not come there with his beams ; nor the moon of heaven by night. The sons of Rathmor remained in darkness, and foresaw their death.

The daughter of Dunthalgo wept in silence, the fair-haired, blue-eyed Colmal \*. Her eye had rolled in secret on Calthor ; his loveliness swelled in her

the Galic language ; which, as I have remarked in a preceding note, is a proof that it was once the universal language of the whole island.

\* *Caol-mhal, a woman with small eye-brows ; small eye-brows were a distinguishing part of beauty in Ossian's time : and he seldom fails to give them to the fine women of his poems.*



her soul. She trembled for her warrior; but what could Colmal do? Her arm could not lift the spear; nor was the sword formed for her side. Her white breast never rose beneath a mail. Neither was her eye the terror of heroes. What canst thou do, O Colmal! for the falling chief? --- Her steps are unequal; her hair is loose: her eye looks wildly through her tears. --- She came, by night, to the hall\*; and armed her lovely form in steel; the steel of a young warrior, who fell in the first of his battles. --- She came to the cave of Calthon, and loosed the thong from his hands.

Arise, son of Rathmor, she said, 'arise, the night is dark. Let us fly to the king of Selma †, chief of fallen Clutha! I am the son of Lamgal who dwelt in thy father's hall. I heard of thy dark  
dwel-

\* That is, the hall where the arms taken from enemies were hung up as trophies. Ossian is very careful to make his stories probable; for he makes Colmal put on the arms of a youth killed in his first battle, as more proper for a young woman, who cannot be supposed strong enough to carry the armour of a fullgrown warrior.

† Fingal.

Dwelling in the cave, and my soul arose. Arise,  
son of Rathmor, for the night is dark. —

Blest voice! replied the chief, comest thou from  
the darkly-rolling clouds? for often the ghosts of his  
fathers descend to Calthon's dreams, since the sun has  
retired from his eyes, and darkness has dwelt around  
him. Or art thou the son of Lamgal, the chief I  
often saw in Clutha? But shall I fly to Fingal, and  
Colmar my brother low? Shall I fly to Morven, and  
the hero closed in night? No: give me that spear, son  
of Lamgal, Calthon will defend his brother.

A thousand warriors, replied the maid, stretch  
their spears round car-borne Colmar. What can Cal-  
thon do against a host so great? Let us fly to the king  
of Morven, he will come with battle. His arm is  
stretched forth to the unhappy; the lightning of his  
sword is round the weak. --- Arise, thou son of Rath-  
mor; the shades of night will fly away. Duntharmo  
will behold thy steps on the field, and thou must  
fall in thy youth.

The fighting hero rose; his tears descend for car-  
borne Colmar. He came with the maid to Selma's

hall ; but he knew not that it was Colmal. The helmet cover'd her lovely face ; and her breast rose beneath the steel. Fingal returned from the chase, and found the lovely strangers. They were like two beams of light , in the midst of the hall.

The king heard the tale of grief ; and turned his eyes around. A thousand heroes half-rose before him ; claiming the war of Teutha. --- I came with my spear from the hill, and the joy of battle rose in my breast : for the king spoke to Ossian in the midst of the people.

Son of my strength, he said, take the spear of Fingal ; go to Teutha's mighty stream , and save the car-borne Colmar. --- Let thy fame return before thee like a pleasant gale ; that my soul may rejoice over my son, who renews the renown of our fathers.--- Ossian ! be thou a storm in battle ; but mild when the foes are low ! --- It was thus my fame arose , O my son ; and be thou like Selma's chief. --- When the haughty come to my halls, my eyes behold them not. But my arm is stretched forth to the unhappy. My sword defends the weak.

I rejoiced in the words of the king: and took  
my rattling arms. --- Diaran \* rose at my side, and  
Dargo † king of spears. --- Three hundred youths  
followed our steps: the lovely strangers were at my  
side.

\* Diaran, father of that Connal who was unfortunately killed by Crimora, his mistress.

† Dargo, the son of Callath, is celebrated in other poems by Ossian. He is said to have been killed by a boar at a hunting party. The lamentation of his mistress, or wife, Mingala, over his body, is extant; but whether it is of Ossian's composition, I cannot determine. It is generally ascribed to him, and has much of his manner; but some traditions mention it as an imitation by some later bard. —  
As it has some poetical merit, I have subjoined it.

**T**he spouse of Dargo came in tears: for Dargo was  
no more! The heroes sigh over Lartho's chief:  
and what shall sad Mingala do? The dark soul van-  
ished like morning mist, before the king of  
spears: but the generous glowed in his presence  
like the morning star.

Who was the fairest and most lovely? Who but  
Collath's stately son? Who sat in the midst of the  
wife, but Dargo of the mighty deeds?

Thy



side. Duntharmo heard the sound of our approach; he gathered the strength of Teutha. --- He stood on a hill with his host; they were like rocks broken with thunder, when their bent trees are singed and bare, and the streams of their chinks have failed.

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Thy hand touched the trembling harp: Thy voice was soft as summer - winds. — Ah me! what shall the heroes say? for Dargo fell before a boar. Pale is the lovely - cheek; the look of which was firm in danger! — Why hast thou failed on our hills, thou fairer than the beams of the sun?

The daughter of Adonfion was lovely in the eyes of the valiant; she was lovely in their eyes, but she chose to be the spouse of Dargo.

But thou art alone, Mingala! the night is coming with its clouds; where is the bed of thy repose? Where but in the tomb of Dargo?

Why dost thou lift the stone, O bard! why dost thou shut the narrow house? Mingala's eyes are heavy, bard! She must sleep with Dargo.

Last night I heard the song of joy in Lartho's lofty hall. But silence now dwells around my bed. Mingala rests with Dargo,

The stream of Teutha rolled, in its pride, before the gloomy foe. I sent a bard to Dunthalmo, to offer the combat on the plain; but he smiled in the darkness of his pride. --- His unsettled host moved on the hill; like the mountain-cloud, when the blast has entered its womb, and scatters the curling gloom on every side.

They brought Colmar to Teutha's bank, bound with a thousand thongs. The chief is sad, but lovely, and his eye is on his friends; for we stood, in our arms, on the opposite bank of Teutha. Dunthalmo came with his spear, and pierced the hero's side: he rolled on the bank in his blood, and we heard his broken sighs.

Calthon rushed into the stream: I bounded forward on my spear. Teutha's race fell before us. Night came rolling down. Dunthalmo rested on a rock, amidst an aged wood. The rage of his bosom burned against the car-borne Calthon. --- But Calthon stood in his grief; he mourned the fallen Colmar; Colmar slain in youth, before his fame arose.

I bade the song of woe to rise, to sooth the mournful chief; but he stood beneath a tree, and often

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often threw his spear on earth. --- The humid eye of Colmal rolled near in a secret tear: she foresaw the fall of Dunthalmo, or of Clutha's battling chief.

Now half the night had passed away. Silence and darkness were on the field; sleep rested on the eyes of the heroes: Calthon's settling soul was still. His eyes were half-closed; but the murmur of Teutha had not yet failed in his ear.

Sleeps the son of Rathmor in his might, and his brother low? Did we not rise to the chace together, and pursue the dark-brown hinds? Colmar was not forgot till he fell; till death had blasted his youth. I lie pale beneath the rock of Lona. O let Calthon rise! the morning comes with its beams; and Dunthalmo will dishonour the fallen.

He passed away in his blast. The rising Calthon saw the steps of his departure. --- He rushed in the sound of his steel; and unhappy Colmal rose. She followed her hero through night, and dragged her spear behind. --- But when Calthon came to Lona's rock, he found his fallen brother. --- The rage of his bosom rose, and he rushed among the foe. The groans of death ascend. They close around the chief. --- He is bound in the midst, and brought to gloomy

Dun-

Dunthalmo. --- The shout of joy arose; and the hills of night replied. ---

I started at the sound: and took my father's spear. Diaran rose at my side; and the youthful strength of Dargo. We missed the chief of Clutha, and our souls were sad. --- I dreaded the departure of my fame; the pride of my valour rose.

Sons of Morven, I said, is it not thus our fathers fought. They rested not on the field of strangers, when the foe did not fall before them. --- Their strength was like the eagles of heaven; their renown is in the song. But our people fall by degrees, and our fame begins to depart. --- What shall the king of Morven say, if Ossian conquers not at Teutha? Rise in your steel, ye warriors, and follow the sound of Ossian's course. He will not return, but renowned, to the echoing walls of Selma.

Morning rose on the blue waters of Teutha; Colmal stood before me in tears. She told of the chief of Clutha: and thrice the spear fell from her hand. My wrath turned against the stranger; for my soul trembled for Calthon.

Son of the feeble hand, I said, do Teutha's warriors fight with tears? The battle is not won with grief;



grief; nor dwells the sigh in the soul of war. ———  
Go to the deer of Carmun, or the lowing herds of  
Teutha. --- But leave these arms, thou son of  
fear; a warrior may lift them in battle. ———

I tore the mail from her shoulders. Her snowy  
breast appeared. She bent her red face to the ground. ---  
I looked in silence to the chiefs. The spear fell from  
my hand; and the sigh of my bosom rose. ———  
But when I heard the name of the maid, my crow-  
ding tears descended. I blessed the lovely beam of  
youth, and bade the battle move.

Why, son of the rock, should Ossian tell how  
Teutha's warriors died? They are now forgot in  
their land; and their tombs are not found on the he-  
ath. --- Years came on with their tempests; and the  
green mounds mouldered away. --- Scarce is the grave  
of Dunthalmo seen, or the place where he fell by the  
spear of Ossian. --- Some gray warrior, half blind  
with age, sitting by night at the flaming oak of the  
hall, tells now my actions to his sons, and the fall of  
the dark Dunthalmo. The faces of youth bend side-  
long towards his voice; surprize and joy burn in their  
eyes ---

I found the son \* of Rathmor bound to an oak;  
my sword cut the thongs from his hands. And I ga-  
ve him the white-bosomed Colmal. --- They dwelt  
in the halls of Teutha; and Ossian returned to Selma.

\* Calthon.

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